

WORKSHOPS, ORAL COMMUNICATION, AND CULTURAL AWARENESS

Contextualized Workshops to Foster Oral Communication and Cultural Awareness

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Abstract


This action research focuses on exploring the contribution of the development and implementation of contextualized workshops to foster oral communication and cultural awareness. This study took place at Luis Carlos Galán Sarmiento public school in Puerto Gaitán, Meta (Colombia) with 36 students of sixth grade aged 12- 14 years old in average. This research study followed the action research approach and the grounded theory approach to analyze the data collected by the application of three instruments: students' artifacts, teacher's field notes, and video/audio-recordings. The findings informed that using contextualized appealing material workshops, students enhanced their meaningful learning since the localized colorful pictures, the examples, and the sequenced activities or lessons, motivated them to learn and construct a successful communication. Likewise, the oral communication was a vehicle to express ideas and feelings as students used body movements, acquired vocabulary, and built new concepts when they shared points of view. Finally, workshops helped students to increase their cultural awareness by means of knowing their own culture that allowed them to think over the actions to protect it.

Keywords: materials development, oral communication, culture, cultural awareness

Resumen

Esta investigación acción se enfoca en explorar la contribución del desarrollo e implementación de talleres contextualizados para promover la comunicación oral y la conciencia cultural. Este estudio se llevó a cabo en el colegio público, Luis Carlos Galán Sarmiento en Puerto Gaitán, Meta (Colombia) con 36 estudiantes de sexto grado, con edades entre los 12 y los 14 años en promedio. Este estudio sigue el enfoque de investigación-acción y el enfoque de teoría fundamentada para analizar los datos recolectados a través de la implementación de tres instrumentos: artefactos de los estudiantes, notas de campo y grabaciones de audio y video. Los hallazgos informaron que, a través del uso de talleres contextualizados con material atractivo, los estudiantes mejoraron su aprendizaje significativo puesto que las imágenes coloridas y locales, los ejemplos y las actividades o lecciones secuenciadas los motivaron a aprender y construir una comunicación exitosa. Del mismo modo, la comunicación oral fue un vehículo para expresar sentimientos e ideas, ya que los estudiantes usaron movimientos corporales, adquirieron vocabulario y construyeron nuevos conceptos cuando compartían puntos de vista. Finalmente, los talleres ayudaron a los estudiantes a aumentar su conciencia cultural mediante el conocimiento de su propia cultura permitiéndoles pensar en acciones para protegerla.

Palabras Clave: desarrollo de materiales, comunicación oral, cultura, conciencia cultural

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2. Descripción
<p>This action research was based on exploring the contribution of the development and implementation of contextualized workshops to foster oral communication and cultural awareness. This study was carried out at Luis Carlos Galán Sarmiento School in Puerto Gaitán, Meta (Colombia) with 36 students of sixth grade between 12 and 14 years old. Moreover, It used the action research approach and the grounded theory approach to analyze the data gathered by the used of three instruments: students' artifacts, field notes, and video/audio-recordings. The outcomes showed that using contextualized appealing material workshops, students enhanced their meaningful learning due to localized colorful pictures, the examples, and the</p>

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sequenced activities or lessons motivated them to learn and construct a successful communication. Similarly, the oral communication was a vehicle to express ideas and feelings since students used body movements, acquired vocabulary, and built new concepts when they shared points of view. Finally, workshops allowed students to increase their cultural awareness through knowing their own culture since they think over the actions to protect culture.

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4. Contenidos

Chapter I

Research Problem

Research Problem

This research study arose from the observation of sixth graders at Luis Carlos Sarmiento School. I used field notes, a diagnosis survey and audio/video recordings as instruments for data collection. I identified that sixth graders had limitations in terms of speaking because they felt afraid of expressing their ideas. They spoke quietly and preferred speaking in Spanish. Furthermore, students were used to working on writing activities and developing mechanical exercises. Therefore, I conducted a research study that aimed at designing and implementing workshops to improve the students' oral communication and cultural awareness.

Research Question

What do the development and implementation of contextualized workshops reveal about sixth graders' oral communication and cultural awareness in a public school?

Research Objectives

General objective. To explore the contribution of the development and implementation of contextualized workshops to the sixth graders' oral communication and cultural awareness in a public school.

Specific objectives. (a) To analyze the appropriateness and usefulness of contextualized materials in the development of students' oral communication; (b) to identify the characteristics of the students' oral communication; and (c) to describe how the contextualized workshops increase students' cultural awareness.

Chapter II

Literature Review

This chapter presents the theoretical constructs that supported this research study: materials development, oral communication, and cultural awareness.

Materials Development (MD)

This construct was defined by Tomlinson (2001) as a field of study and a practical engagement. It involves the principles and procedures to design, implement, and evaluate the materials elaborated by teachers to contribute to the students' language learning. In the same line of thought, Masuhara (2006) stated that MD is an approach that permits teachers to innovate in their classes and create different kinds of resources to generate effective teaching. Finally, Núñez and Téllez (2009) argued that "MD entails a rational process and artistic inspiration that together perform a central role in attaining appealing teaching-learning resources" (p. 175).

Oral communication

This construct was defined by Mojibur (2010) as a "rhetorical skill" (p. 3). According to Brown (1994), there are five practical considerations that should be taken into account when conducting pedagogical research on oral communication: conversational discourse, pronunciation, accuracy and fluency, affective factors; and the interaction effect. Likewise, I kept in mind three micro-skills suggested by Brown (1994): body language, communicative functions, and lexical units.

Cultural awareness

Tomlinson (2001) stated that cultural awareness consists in “developing inner sense of the equality of cultures, an increased understanding of your own and other people’s cultures” (p. 5). Similarly, Jackson (2011) mentioned that cultural awareness is a mental process in which everybody reflects upon their cultural experiences in relation to “gender, religion, age, socio-economic status, geographic localization, educational level, among others” (p. 3).

Chapter III

Methodological Design

This chapter covers the research and instructional designs. The first one deals with the approach, type of study, and instruments. The second one embraces the pedagogical intervention of this action research study.

Instructional Design

This section presents the pedagogical intervention in light of the Theory of Language and Language Learning, the main and specific instructional objectives, and the intervention as innovation. It also explores the characteristics of the methodological approach, the connection between the research inquiry and the pedagogical intervention, and the instructional phases.

Chapter IV

Data Analysis

This chapter explains the data analysis procedure used to interpret the information gathered by means of the contextualized lessons, the teacher’s field notes, and the video/audio recordings. Besides, it presents the research categories and subcategories that I established to answer the research question.

Category 1: Contextualized appealing materials to enhance students’ meaningful learning

Relevance of localized colorful pictures to motivate students to learn in a meaningful way. (1) The contextualized colorful pictures encouraged students to learn and increased their enthusiasm towards the class (Núñez et al., 2004). (2) The colorful pictures played an essential role in the implementation of the

materials since they caught the students' attention and motivated them to learn new vocabulary or topics (Tomlinson, 1998).

Using examples to understand the activities and to construct successful communication. (1)

Students followed some of the examples presented in the workshops to improve their oral communication.

(2) Students took advantage of the samples of the workshops to build sentences following the grammar structures and the vocabulary provided in the lesson (Erneling, 1993).

The sequenced activities or lessons enhance the student's learning development. (1) The sequenced activities or lessons helped students to understand the workshops and improve their oral communication skill (Brooks and Stock, 1999). (2) Following a sequence contributed to develop an organized learning process given that learners first started to acquire some vocabulary and then, at the end of each lesson, they showed a final product.

Category 2: Oral communication as a vehicle to express ideas or feelings

Fostering the communication with body movements. (1) Students used their body to communicate their feelings or points of view in the English classes (Kuhnke, 2007). (2) When students used their hands, they were able to call their classmates' attention (Legel and Kuczala, 2010).

Strengthening the communication through the acquisition of vocabulary. (1) Students became aware of the importance of vocabulary to express their opinions in oral conversations (Giambo and McKinney, 2004). (2) Vocabulary was fostered through constant exposure to culture-related activities (Coady & Huckin, 2003).

Building new ideas or concepts by sharing points of view and feelings. (1) The workshops about cultural context allowed students to communicate their ideas and express their feelings. (2) Students were able to create meaning and conceptualize what they perceive from their reality (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004).

Category 3: Developing students' cultural awareness by means of knowing their own culture

Cultural growth through cultural knowledge. (1) Sixth graders had the opportunity to identify some cultural activities. (2) The students started to develop their superficial culture since they recognized some

typical aspects of their community (Hidalgo, 1993).

Thinking over the actions to protect culture. (1) Students worked on activities that allowed them to reflect upon their environment and culture (Boyd & Fales, 1983). (2) The learners thought about the importance of the festivals that belong to their context.

Chapter V

Conclusions and Pedagogical Implications

This chapter explores the conclusions of the research study, the pedagogical implications, the limitations, and the further research questions.

5. Metodología

Research design

Research approach

This study was framed by the qualitative research which, according to Marshall and Rossman (1999), might be considered as “a broad approach study of social phenomena, its various genres are naturalistic and interpretive and they draw of multiple methods of inquiry” (p. 2). In this regard, the qualitative research permitted me to study an issue from a specific social context.

Type of Study

The type of study that I selected was action research because it allowed me not only to identify the learners’ difficulties, but also to carry out a plan to solve that problematic situation (Costello, 2011).

Participants

Students. I used the convenience sampling technique to select 10 sixth graders aged between 12 and 14. This technique allowed me to choose the participants in accordance with their availability and willingness to take part of this research study (Stevens, 1996).

Teacher as researcher and materials developer. I performed three different roles along the implementation of this study. As a teacher, I guided my students in their learning process. As a researcher, I

collected and analyzed the information obtained with the data gathering instruments (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983). As a materials developer, I designed the contextualized workshops to improve the students' difficulties in their language learning (Graves, 1997; Núñez, 2010; Núñez & Téllez, 2009; Núñez et al. (2009), Tomlinson, 1988).

Data Gathering Instruments:

Students' artifacts. This instrument allows the researcher to gather personal information of the society, the people or a culture (Given, 2008). The workshops that I designed contained self-assessment formats, which provided me with data about the participants' opinions regarding this pedagogical intervention.

Field notes. This instrument "is a way of reporting observations, reflections, and reactions to classroom problems" (Hopkins, 1993, p.116). Hence, I used field to register the students' interventions when they participated in the different oral communication activities.

Video-recordings. During the implementation of this study, this instrument helped me to obtain detailed information concerning the participants' oral communication and the development of the three micro-skills: body movement, communicative functions, and lexical units (Hennink, 2007).

Surveys. I administered this instrument to identify the students' needs and interests regarding the three theoretical constructs that supported this research study (Pinsonneault & Kramer, 1993).

Analysis Process

I used the grounded approach to establish my own theory based on the data collected (Strauss and Corbin, 1997). Besides, this approach permitted me to find commonalities among the three instruments to answer the research question that led this study.

Triangulation

I also used triangulation, which might be conceived as "the combination of different methods, study groups, local and temporal settings, and different theoretical perspectives in dealing with a phenomenon

[...] it can also be an approach to do qualitative research in an appropriate way” (p. 444). Likewise, the color-coding technique was a useful tool to organize the information visually and define the categories and subcategories (Klein, 2012).

Instructional design

Pedagogical intervention

The pedagogical intervention was focused on developing and implementing two contextualized workshops to foster sixth graders’ oral communication and cultural awareness in a public school (Bolitho, 2003; Graves, 1997; Harmer, 2007; Maley, 1998; Núñez & Téllez, 2009; Small, 1997; Tomlinson, 1998).

Instructional objectives

Main Objective: To develop and implement contextualized workshops to improve the students’ oral communication micro-skills (lexical, body language, communicative functions) and cultural awareness.

Specific Objectives: (a) to assess the suitability and effectiveness of the contextualized workshops; (b) to promote students’ participation by using contextualized workshops; (c) to create a comfortable learning environment that allows students to develop three oral communication micro-skills; (d) To make students aware of the importance of developing three oral communication micro-skills (lexical, communicative functions, body language) and cultural awareness; and (e) to provide students with vocabulary that allows them to communicate their opinions about cultural awareness.

Second Language Acquisition Principles

The contextualized workshops were supported by six SLA principles established by Tomlinson (as cited in Núñez et al., 2009). These principles were focused on: (1) striking content, (2) self-confidence, (3) usefulness, (4) self-investment, (5) use of language, and (6) material assessment.

Methodological Approach Underlying Pedagogical Intervention

The methodological approach involved community-based pedagogies because they connect the

students' context or community to the standards to improve the educational context (Sharkey & Clavijo, 2012).

Intervention as innovation

The development and implementation of contextualized workshops was innovative in the school where I implemented this intervention because they aided the sixth graders to improve their oral communication and cultural awareness. In this sense, Núñez et al. (2004), pointed out that “teachers as innovative professionals, have the potential to explore their creativity by designing materials for their classes” (p.130).

Theory of language and language learning. The vision of language underlying this pedagogical intervention was the culture and ideology perspective since it conceives the language as the “ability to interact with the culture and world view” (Tudor, 2001, p. 70). Besides, I took into account other three visions: a) the *linguistic perspective*, b) the *functional perspective*, and c) the *self-expression perspective*. In regards to the main vision of language learning, I kept in mind two aspects: (a) habit formation in terms of developing communication with confidence and fluency (Tudor, 2001); and (b) experiential learning because it contributed to the development of the oral communication micro-skills (lexical, communicative function, body language).

Connection of the pedagogical intervention with the research question. This research study was based on developing and implementing contextualized workshops to enhance oral communication micro-skills (lexical, body language, communicative functions) and cultural awareness. Richards (2005) stated that “the primary relevance of language and language learning research to materials development is through its application to syllabus design issues as a source for instructional principles that can inform the design of instructional materials” (p. 18). In this sense, the students worked on two workshops with cultural topics related to the school curriculum. It is worth mentioning that the purpose of these materials was to encourage the students to communicate their ideas orally and to increase their cultural awareness.

Instructional phases. I followed four main phases: (1) I documented myself about the different MD

frameworks to propose my own; (2) I wrote a consent form to ask permission to the school's Principal and the students' parents for carrying out this study with the sixth graders; (3) I sensitized my students about my research study; and (4) I implemented the contextualized workshops with the students.

Proposed materials development framework. Some scholars (Graves, 1996; Jolly and Bolitho, 1998; Masuhara, 1998; Núñez et al., 2004; Núñez and Téllez, 2009; Núñez et al., 2009; and Núñez et al., 2012) agreed on the fact that it is necessary to follow steps such as administering a needs assessment, establishing the objectives, the methodological approach and the content; and finally, revising and evaluating the material. However, Graves (1996) incorporated the resources and constraints; Masuhara (1998) added the design of a syllabus; Jolly and Bolitho (1998) suggested the identification of a problem and the contextual realization of the proposed new materials; Núñez and Téllez (2009) considered the resources and constraints; and Núñez et al. (2009) and Núñez et al. (2012) included the adjustments. Bering in mind the previous authors, I proposed my MD framework: *Student's community, relating local culture to the syllabus, analyzing the effectiveness of cultural materials, and cultural awareness understanding.*

Informed consent. I wrote a letter for asking permission to the school's principal and the students' parents to conduct this research study.

Sensitization. I explained my students the importance of using the English language to communicate their ideas orally. Besides, I asked the participants to reflect upon the relevance of culture.

Implementation of the materials. In this phase I took into account the needs analysis survey and the school's curriculum to design and implement the contextualized workshops.

6. Conclusiones

Conclusions

The development and implementation of contextualized workshops revealed the following:

- The appealing material improved the students' learning process (Núñez & Téllez, 2009; Tomlinson, 1998).

- Examples were the basis to understand the activities and construct a successful oral communication (Erneling, 1993).
- Students fostered their oral communication micro-skills (body movements, lexical, communicative functions) thanks to the oral communication activities implemented in the EFL classroom (Gulikers, Bastiaens, & Kirschner, 2006).
- Students strengthened their perception of culture because they had the opportunity to recognize some cultural aspects of people from the west region of Colombia (Tomlinson, 2013).

Pedagogical Implications

- This research study improved my performance in the classroom as I became aware of the importance of bearing in mind the students' needs and interests when designing contextualized materials.
- This intervention was an innovative way to teach and learn English in the school where this study took place because it considered both the curriculum and the students' context. Likewise, this research study might be a useful resource for the ELT community as it provides suggestions to develop the students' oral communication micro-skills.
- Contextualized workshops are excellent resources to motivate students to reflect upon their reality and the role they have in their communities.

Limitations of the study

- Students' English level and their academic duties.
- Teachers' strike.

Further research

- How does materials development contribute to explore the students' cultural identity in their speaking performances?
- What is the impact of cultural materials integrated to institutional projects on the development of

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students' meaningful learning?

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Introduction

English language learning has turned to be part of personal, academic and professional growth at the international and local level since it is a universal language allowing us to communicate with people from different cultures. In this regard, speaking is a significant skill for people to share their views, create good relationships in different contexts such as education, family, and business, among others, and manage real situations related to different fields. Therefore, people become competitive communicators and have more opportunities to attain individual, academic and professional achievements. In this sense, this research study focuses on exploring the contribution of contextualized workshops, as didactic materials, to foster sixth graders' oral communication and cultural awareness.

Moreover, the Ministry of Education (MEN, acronym in Spanish) and Mckinsey Company (2014) established the national program of bilingualism "Colombia very well" which pursues that Colombian people will be the highest English level in South America by 2025. Considering this fact, teachers need to help students in developing speaking, writing, listening, and reading skills to build the communicative competence (Bilingualism law, law 1651, 2013). Hence, it is important to inquiry about how teaching materials can contribute to students' language development and to their cultural awareness enhancement when they express their ideas and participate in oral academic activities.

Therefore, this research study intended to develop and implement contextualized materials as the way to foster both the students' oral communication micro skills such as the accomplishment of communicative functions, use of lexical units and body language, as well as sensitivity towards their own cultural background. The aim of the current study was to encourage students to use words or phrases gradually, and feel comfortable to communicate their views and

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feelings in the foreign language. For this reason, this proposal centered on qualitative research as its purpose was to understand a social issue to find a possible solution (Creswell, 1998).

This research study consists of five essential chapters. The first chapter presents the statement of the problem, the research question and objectives, some related studies, the setting and rationale. The second chapter portrays the literature review. The third chapter describes the research and instructional designs. The fourth chapter refers to data analysis and findings. Finally, the fifth chapter encompasses conclusions, pedagogical implications, limitations and questions for further research.

Chapter I

Research Problem

Statement of the Problem

This research study emerged as the result of a systematic observation of sixth grade students at Luis Carlos Sarmiento School. During my observations, I used field notes and a diagnosis survey as instruments for data collection (See Appendix A). Thus, I noticed that sixth grade students faced problems in terms of speaking as they felt fear to express themselves, since they spoke quietly and preferred speaking in Spanish. Besides, they focused their attention on developing the writing skill in previous years, and they used textbooks to develop mechanical activities they did not feel identified with or understand.

In addition to the aforementioned observations, those commercial textbooks did not meet the sociocultural, academic, historic, economic background of students neither of teachers (Canagarajah, 2005; Howard & Major, 2005; Kumaravadivelu, 2001; Rico, 2012) and mainly portray surface culture (Gómez, 2015; Hidalgo, 1993). Hence, acknowledging that teaching materials should be created “by each community in relation to its history, needs, and aspirations” (Canagarajah, 2005, p. 199), and include “a variety of adds-on to meet the demand for a local fit” (Kumaravadivelu, 2014, p. 75), I decided to develop and implement contextualized workshops where cultural awareness could be fostered towards the protection of the environment and the importance of participating in cultural activities as local and regional festivals enrooted in long-standing/ancient traditions and beliefs. It was necessary to generate opportunities for students to become more participative in their classes, improve their speaking skill, and become confident when talking in front of an audience or expressing themselves in English, since this was the first time they worked with an English teacher.

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Finally, the world cultural interconnection requires that students speak at least one foreign language to understand that there are different cultures that offer several views about a wide range of issues related to race, gender, religion, politics, and science, among others.

Consequently, I formulated the next question:

Research Question

What do the development and implementation of contextualized workshops reveal about sixth graders' oral communication and their cultural awareness in a public school?

Research Objectives

General objective: to explore the contribution of the development and implementation of contextualized workshops to the sixth graders' oral communication and their cultural awareness in a public school.

Specific objectives: (a) to analyze the appropriateness and usefulness of contextualized materials in developing students' oral communication, (b) to identify the characteristics of the students' oral communication, and (c) to describe how the contextualized workshops increase students' cultural awareness.

Related Studies

On the basis of the previous inquiry and objectives, I deemed pertinent mentioning the studies below, as they included at least two of the constructs underlying the current research study. On the other hand, these studies enriched my role as a teacher-researcher since they referred to materials development, oral communication, and cultural awareness.

In relation to materials development and cultural awareness, Ramos, Aguirre and Hernández (2012) conducted an action research study, integrating eleventh graders' rural context by means of the design and implementation of a curricular unit in a public school in Colombia. They gathered information through a journal, a semi-structured interview, and students' surveys.

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The results of the research showed that the students' cultural belonging and their intercultural understanding increased. This study is important to my research as it focuses on contextualized materials helping students increase their cultural angle. In this sense, the contextualized workshops could contribute to foster the learners' cultural awareness since the concepts of Ramos et al., (2012) revealed cultural awareness and materials development.

In the same way, the qualitative action research study developed by Castañeda (2012) explored how adolescents made sense of the culture-based materials implemented in the English lessons. The population of the study was 51 eighth grade students in a public school, located in Bogotá. The researcher designed lessons with contextualized cultural content where learners compared their culture with the foreign one. She collected data through surveys, field notes, audio recordings, video-recordings and students' artifacts. The outcomes revealed that students could understand the differences and similarities of both cultures to enrich their own. Likewise, the teacher-researcher fostered students' engagement in foreign language classes. In this regard, it is connected to my research since it demonstrated that the cultural materials motivate learners to use the foreign language. Besides, working with contextualized workshops enables students to learn and respect their own culture and others'.

Likewise, Savedra and Arias (2012) implemented workshops with Colombian cultural content to explore the impact of the pedagogical intervention in English basic level students' language learning and awareness of their own culture. The researchers gathered data through observations, questionnaires, and video recordings to analyze the information. The results of this action research study revealed that besides of identity and communication, cultural awareness affects students' attitudes when learning a language with topics of their culture. Thus, this project contributed to the current study since the purpose of this qualitative-action research was to

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promote the students' cultural awareness through the implementation of workshops built on topics connected to their cultural context.

Regarding oral communication and materials development, Julio (2015) analyzed and described how interactive activities based on cooperative learning develop micro-skills of oral communication in terms of using the language for pragmatic purposes. This study was a qualitative action research where the researcher designed and implemented six workshops to develop the micro skills of oral communication in tenth graders in a public school in Bogotá, Colombia. The researcher obtained data using instruments such as video recordings, field notes, and interviews. The outcome was the learners' enhancement in their oral communication as they participated in the interactive activities actively. This research study is relevant as it fostered the children's oral communication through workshops and used the same instruments I selected to gather data. Moreover, students worked in groups to feel confident to start speaking of their own culture to become sensitive people towards culture.

Similarly, the action research study carried by Parga (2009) concerned about the students' weaknesses in terms of their oral skills development since learners, who were in eighth grade, could not advance in their oral communication ability. For that reason, he used different contextualized materials that aimed at improving the learners' oral communication. The researcher applied audio-recordings, video-recordings, and field notes to gather information. The outcomes revealed that students felt comfortable in the oral communication activities, improved their pronunciation, stress, rhythm and intonation. This study nurtured my research with the use of oral communication and materials development as main constructs to create the appropriated lessons to foster the oral skills in a public school in Colombia.

In relation to cultural awareness and oral communication, Barrera (2012) aimed at examining teaching cultural awareness in students of Basic English level. Thus, as a pedagogical

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intervention 16 KWL (to know, to want, and to learn) charts were used to collect information concerning what students knew, what they wanted to know, and what they had learned in terms of culture and cultural awareness to speak of their cultural background. For this action research study, the participants were students of first semester at UPTC in Sogamoso, who had Basic English level. The researcher gathered data by means of observations, field notes and students' KWL charts. The results showed that culture was important to develop materials and that it should be included in the curriculum as it becomes a way for students to communicate their own cultural understanding and to promote their cultural awareness. It is important to mention that, although the participants belonged to a public university, both studies agreed in the students' English level.

Setting and Rationale

I developed this research study at Luis Carlos Galán Sarmiento School, a public educational institution located in Puerto Gaitan, Meta in Colombia. This institution is new in the teaching of high school students, and its mission focuses on a humanistic approach that seeks to educate students with values and principles that contribute to create a better society with respect and tolerance among people. In other words, the “galanista” student should be an integral person who collaborates to the country development (Horizonte institucional, 2016). This institution has two shifts: morning and afternoon, and their students belong to middle-low socio-economic level what makes difficult for them to have technological devices at home.

Speaking is a relevant skill of the language because it plays an essential role in the process of communication. In this case, English is a universal language; most population uses it to connect with the rest of the world. According to one article published on ABC news, over 850 million of people use English language to interact with people or gadgets (Top 10 most spoken and most popular languages in the world, 2015). Therefore, language teachers are committed to

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create comfortable spaces and appropriate resources to improve their proficiency in teaching and learning processes to enhance students' meaningful learning. The Colombian government has a great expectation about having most people using the English language proficiently in a near future. Considering this fact, the Ministry of Education (MEN, acronym in Spanish) established, article 23 of the General Education Law (1994), the teaching of foreign languages as an essential part of educational curricula.

Additionally, this study contributed to my teaching context since some teachers can take advantage of this kind of materials to implement in their English classes to improve the students' learning process. Likewise, this research contributed to the EFL community of teachers because it is an innovative tool regarding the development and implementation of contextualized workshops to foster oral communication and cultural awareness.

As the purpose of this research study was fostering the students' oral communication and cultural awareness; participants in general could develop a sense of belonging to the school community and awoke their sensitivity towards cultural situations that occurred in their own local context and other peoples' settings. Finally, this research study contributes both theoretically and methodologically to the research line on Materials Development, ascribed to the research group Critical Pedagogy and Didactics for Social Transformation (Núñez, Téllez & Castellanos, 2013). In terms of the theoretical contribution, I developed materials that satisfy the guiding principles of "equity and inclusion" (p. 6) and "quality assurance and professional development" (p. 8). The former is achieved as the materials I proposed to consider the local context as central in language teaching and learning, and the latter is attained as I gained expertise, knowledge of the materials development field, which has helped me to grow as a professional. Likewise, this research study contributes to the research line in methodological terms since its pedagogical intervention contemplates the proposal of a contextualized framework to develop materials under the community-based pedagogies that privilege students' socio-cultural universe. This way we

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educate respectful students who understand their cultural background and differences, which help them value and respect others' culture (Flohr, 2007). In this regard, this research study foment the education of more sensitive and responsible individuals to construct a more inclusive society.

Besides that, the materials I developed are informed with a selection of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) principles and focus on cultural content. Furthermore, this research study followed the theoretical frameworks proposed by Núñez, Téllez, Castellanos and Ramos (2009), Núñez et al. (2013), and Tomlinson (2011), among others, to design contextualized materials in my pedagogical intervention. To continue with, I present a detailed description of the theoretical constructs underpinning the current study.

Chapter II

Literature Review

Considering that the aim of this research study was to explore the contribution of contextualized workshops in developing oral communication and cultural awareness, materials development, speaking skill and oral communication and cultural awareness, constitute the main theoretical issues to focus on. Accordingly, it is worth mentioning that, materials development is the path through which I designed my contextualized workshops as a way to explore students' oral communication and cultural enhancement.

Materials

Materials are the pedagogical resources or instruments that teachers use in the classroom to improve the learning and teaching processes. According to Tomlinson (2011), "Materials could obviously be videos, DVDs, emails, dictionaries, you tube, grammar books, readers, workbooks ... to increase the learners' knowledge and/or experience of the language" (p. 2). This means that, materials expand to all the resources teachers can use with the purpose of promoting language learning. In the same line of thought, Núñez and Téllez (2009) stated that the creation of materials helps teachers to improve their pedagogical practices since they can reflect on their students' learning process to find the best instrument to motivate them. Consequently, I considered pertinent to include my students' interests and needs into my culture-based workshops to keep them motivate and catch their attention.

Materials development. To begin with, materials development (MD henceforth) is a relevant aspect for language learning. Thus, it is understood as a field of study and a practical engagement regarding the principles and procedures to design, implement, and evaluate the materials elaborated by teachers to contribute to the students' language learning (Tomlinson, 2001). Similarly, Masuhara (2006) stated that MD is an approach that permits teachers, by

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means of self-reflection, to innovate in their classes and create different kinds of resources to generate effective teaching. This means that, MD constitutes an integral element of the teaching-learning process as it involves awareness, organization, novelty and creativity.

As previously said, materials development demands from teachers a conscious but explorative process of thinking and action. In this regard, Núñez and Téllez (2009) considered “MD entails a rational process and artistic inspiration that together perform a central role in attaining appealing teaching-learning resources” (p. 175). Indeed, when it comes to language teaching and learning, teachers are encouraged to use their knowledge and imagination to satisfy classroom learning needs. Finally, Núñez et al. (2013), further elaborated on Materials Development as a field of study, “it demands an informed methodology that allows validating the efficiency, appropriateness and relevance of materials within the context of learning a language” (p. 10). Thus, as this research study emerged from the observations in the English classes, I wanted to find the appropriate pedagogical strategy to catch the students’ attention and motivation to learn the English language through the inclusion of appropriate and relevant topics like the cultural ones, originated in their own local context, in the materials proposed for the pedagogical intervention.

Authentic vs. unauthentic material. To continue with, it is important to consider the relevance of the origin of the materials for language teaching. Gilmore (2007) argued that the purpose of authentic materials is to “produce learners who are able to communicate effectively in the target language of a particular speech community, that is to say, learners who are COMMUNICATIVELY COMPETENT” (p. 6). It refers to the way teachers prepare students to communicate their ideas in the actual life. In few words, it is to use “genuine and natural” (Thomas, 2014, p. 15) content in materials. On the other hand, Alijani (2014) stated that “non-authentic materials are made by nonnative speakers and usually are simplified form of authentic

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materials” (p. 152). It means that the designers of these materials are people who use English as a foreign language. Consequently, the contextualized workshops I developed were non- authentic and authentic materials since they included real-life topics for non-native speakers.

Types of materials. There are different types of materials that teachers can use in their teaching contexts. According to Tomlinson (2012), “materials are course books, videos, graded readers, flash cards, games, websites and mobile phone interactions, though, inevitably, much of the literature focuses on printed materials” (p. 143). By the same token, Núñez and Téllez (2015) stated that the” materials are a book, a module, a didactic unit, a workshop, a worksheet, or a lesson, or learning tasks (p. 57). Thus, the materials selected for language learning are consequence of reflecting on the local needs as a creative response to improve the teaching and learning processes. In this sense, I was aware of the fact that I needed to respond to students’ needs and interests in their specific context and that the materials I designed and implemented were useful, practical and motivating.

Contextualized workshops. For learning to happen is important to consider the relevance of the content, the activities and the language use. According to Aebersold and Lee (2002), contextualized materials are the ones that take students’ interests and inquiries as points of departure for learning. In the same line of thought, Núñez, Pineda and Téllez (2004) claimed that materials “should explore students’ personalities, learning styles, language development expectations, likes, dislikes, needs and the contexts they are embedded in” (p. 132). As ascertained by Núñez (2017), “Contextualized, tailor –made, or customized materials are those especially developed for particular learners in a given context where the learning and teaching processes take place” (slide, 76) . Therefore, the workshops I developed held local cultural content that was evident in readings, audios, video clips, among others, that aimed at promoting oral communication and cultural awareness.

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Nevertheless, I was conscious that designing my materials was a demanding but necessary task to develop. In this sense, Núñez (2010), Núñez, et al. (2004), Núñez and Téllez (2008), Núñez and Téllez (2009), Núñez, Téllez, Castellanos and Ramos (2009) and Ramos and Aguirre (2014) pointed out that materials are responsive to the needs of students and beneficial for both learners and teachers. In essence, materials should facilitate the English learning and teaching processes (Tomlinson, 2008). Hence, MD improved my role as a teacher because it allowed me to reflect upon my practices to find the best strategy to foster the students' oral communication as they handled weaknesses in their speaking ability.

Materials development principles. In terms of MD principles, Núñez and Téllez (2009) asserted that materials should have attractive presentation, make students feel comfortable, have interesting and practical content, allow for self-exploration, use contextualized vocabulary, rely of students' emotions, give time for concentration and understanding and allow to give and receive feedback. Therefore, the teacher-researcher has the complex task of designing accurate and appropriate materials for the EFL classroom. Similarly, Núñez and Téllez (2009) and Núñez et al. (2009) elaborated on Tomlinson's (1998) interpretation of Second Language Acquisition (SLA henceforth) principles to develop materials. Thus, the contextualized workshops implemented in this research study, considered the previous SLA principles as the scaffolding to guide and help students develop their oral communication and their cultural awareness.

Indeed, both SLA principles in combination to cultural topics, contributed to give shape to my innovation inside the EFL classroom. It is relevant to consider that materials built on cultural topics increase the learners' knowledge and awareness (Rico, 2012) and by this way oral communication could be nurtured and triggered. As a consequence, it is important to focus on what speaking entails and its role in language learning.

Speaking Skill

Speaking is the ability to communicate messages orally. More precisely, in Gusdorf's words (1965), "Speaking constitutes the essence of the world and the essence of the man" (p. 37). It means that speaking permeates human relationships as well as our own relation with the world. According to Richards and Renandya (2002), "Speaking is used of many different purposes, and each purpose involves different skills" (p. 201). This means that, speaking depends on the kind of context we are, the speaking situation, the audience and the knowledge behind the inner act of communication. Likewise, Brown (2007) established some principles to improve the teaching and learning processes; those are divided in three big categories as cognitive, affective, and linguistics. The first one is related to the students' knowledge, the second one refers to emotions or feelings, and the third one makes reference to the language use. The previous categories are relevant to develop the purposes of this research study and I decided to focus on oral communication as it represented an issue that was affecting students' language learning inside my classroom.

Oral communication. Communication is the process in which people share and convey information, thoughts, opinions, and feelings. Therefore, oral communication does not only imply correct pronunciation or grammar structures, but choosing words, using them in correct order according to the context to convey the right meaning when speaking (Mackey, 1965, as cited in Bigate, 1987). When communicating orally, speakers have to consider the context, the decoder, and the message to obtain effective communicative interaction. Thus, the aim when communicating is to make our messages as clear as possible so that our listeners can interpret them and respond to, according to what the messages entail in terms of time, space and cultural background. As a result, communication conveys the idea of an interactive process. Mojibur's (2010) conceives oral communication as a "rhetorical skill" (p. 3); it means that oral

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communication is an interactive process where people can establish informal, not previously planned communication.

However, communication entails some aspects to be aware of when doing research in oral communication. In this regard, Brown (1994) stated five practical considerations to observe when conducting pedagogical research on oral communication. First, the conversational discourse is the ability to get pragmatic objectives by an interactive way depending on the teachers' techniques, students and context. Second, teaching pronunciation is the manner, which students learn to produce sounds in a different way due to the variety of accents. Third, accuracy and fluency are aspects that help speakers convey clear and natural messages in communication. Fourth, affective factors are the external circumstances that interfere with oral communication. Finally, the interaction effect relates to the fact of finding appropriate words to say something to others, and to the way they react towards that message. In other words, when students start a facing oral communication, this interaction is nurtured or affected by the continuous exposure to the target language and the influence from others. Indeed, when it comes to oral communication, there are some micro-skills that I want to consider as they are essential to foster students' effective communication.

Oral communication micro-skills. This concept deals with the relevance of creating a bridge between the “form of the language and the functions of the language” (Brown, 1994, p. 271). When students connect form and function, they are able to communicate and develop communicative competence. In this sense, I decided to include in my workshops these three micro skills: *body language*, *communicative functions*, and *lexical units*, as a way to trigger and complement the students' language performance in the target language.

Indeed, in real life situations we consider our oral communication in terms of what is needed for making ourselves understood how we communicate and which words we use.

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Besides, through oral interaction, learners are able to understand the value of speaking English as a means of communication that allows them to acquire knowledge from different fields (Byram, 1997). Indeed, the aim of this research study was allowing students to share their culture and increase knowledge about it through different topics promoting respect towards others and a more positive perception about what makes people different.

Furthermore, oral communication micro-skills foster students' communicative competence since they have the opportunity to use the language in real situations. In this way, participants express their views regarding current topics concerned to our society. Therefore, workshops based on these micro-skills (lexical, body language, and communicative functions) help students be more conscious about how the process of communication takes place and what is needed to convey meaning. What is more, promoting oral interaction inside the EFL classroom requires from teachers and students to relate content to topics and this is why I choose culture as a triggering point of departure for developing my workshops and motivate students' interaction and oral communication.

Culture

Culture identifies people, regions, and countries. In terms of culture, humanists defined culture as a “way of life” (Muller, 2005, p. 11); that is, culture embodies norms, values, and customs conveyed by people who belong to one community (Gomez, 2015). Furthermore, culture links to the identity as the Constitución Política de Colombia (1991) stated, “culture in its different manifestations is the basis of nationality” (p. 24). It means that the humans by means of their culture can represent their countries or communities. Therefore, it is worth highlighting the concept of cultural awareness because it plays a significant role in peoples' lives.

Cultural awareness. Communication is embedded into a cultural background that when considered, expands people's views and knowledge. In fact, one of the main purposes of this

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research study is to explore how cultural awareness is promoted through students' oral interaction, which means that there is a sense of responsibility towards what language can tell us from others. According to Tomlinson (2001), cultural awareness embodies:

Gradually developing inner sense of the equality of cultures, an increased understanding of your own and other people's cultures, and a positive interest in how cultures both connect and differ. Such awareness can broaden the mind, increase tolerance and facilitate international communication. (p. 5)

In other words, cultural awareness creates the opportunity to learn from people's own culture and other cultures to understand people's behaviors or customs to respect and accept humans' differences. In the same line of thought, Jackson (2011) stated that cultural awareness is a mental process in which everybody reflects upon their cultural experiences in relation to "gender, religion, age, socio-economic status, geographic localization, and educational level, among others" (p. 3). Regarding this, students need to be aware of the relevance of culture in their lives because they can interpret their context to start adopting a proper behavior in different events or situations (Flohr, 2007). As a consequence, the workshops I designed comprise cultural topics to contribute to integral education of individuals inside a community.

In addition, the materials to foster cultural awareness should include the peoples' experiences or known topics to create a comfortable atmosphere to start conversations. Thus, students can exchange their views about their interests, having the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to understand and reflect on the relevance of culture for humans. Therefore, the selection of themes is essential to develop contextualized materials to foster the students' cultural awareness. In this regard, I decided to use the *surface culture* as this culture is more familiar to the population I worked with.

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Indeed, the *surface culture* is one of the components of culture, which consists of food, national costumes, traditional music and dance, literature, sports, arts, and specific holidays (Frank, 2013). It means that surface culture refers to visual aspects of one group or community as its customs or traditions.

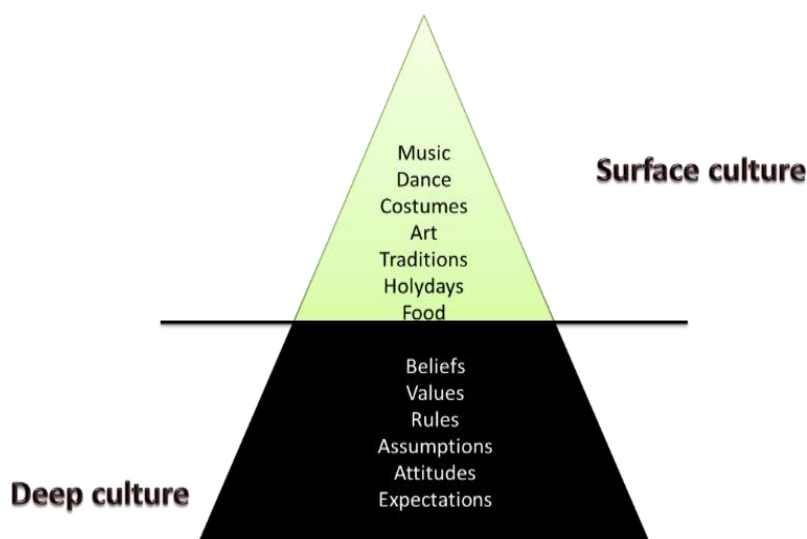


Figure 1. Hidalgo's concept of culture. Selected from Hidalgo (1993)

As seen above, there are two elements of culture. According to Hidalgo (1993), the surface culture is the concrete level of the culture because it is tangible as festivals; and *deep culture*, the symbolic level, which is abstract: values and beliefs. Thus, starting by the external factors related to aspects of students' own culture was more relevant for my students to enhance understanding of their culture or a different one. Moreover, learners understood these topics in comparison to concepts like their internal emotions or feelings that they were building. Therefore, the workshops designed centered on students' interests and needs to achieve the objective of this research study and those workshops include aspects of the surface culture level since students found local topics like typical dishes, festivals, parks, and touristic places, among others.

To sum up, MD gives students and teacher the opportunity to first, improve language learning by considering language needs, particularities of the local context, and second, to

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envision possibilities for language teaching and learning methodologies focused on the community. Besides, oral communication in the EFL classroom is the result of a constant interaction between speakers and the inner aspects of communication and finally, local cultural issues constitute a way to start developing in our students a more insightful and purposeful perception of their world and their role on it.

Chapter III

Methodological Design

This chapter considers the research and instructional designs. The first entails the approach, type of study, and instruments. The second is the pedagogical intervention of this action research study, which focused on developing and implementing contextualized workshops to foster sixth graders' oral communication and cultural awareness in a public school.

Research Approach

This research study seeks for understanding a particular phenomenon related to language learning. For doing so, I decided to use the qualitative approach as the approach to develop my research study. In Marshall and Rossman's (1999) words, qualitative research is "a broad approach study of social phenomena, its various genres are naturalistic and interpretive and they draw of multiple methods of inquiry" (p. 2). This means that research emerges from the real context, and the qualitative researchers are in charge of studying the environment to understand the social issues without intervening in the situation (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). In the same line of thought, the qualitative approach is inductive and unlimited since data are descriptive rather than numerical (Maxwell, 2013). Thus, this study looks into a particular reality that takes place within the context of the participant students.

Furthermore, another characteristic of qualitative approach is that it "...spans the topics in the social and human sciences, and a hallmark of qualitative research today is deep involvement in issues in gender, culture and marginalized groups" (Creswell, 2007, p. 43). In short, this study was a qualitative research due to the description of specific events occurred in class to identify and understand the students' weaknesses in relation to speaking skills and cultural awareness.

Type of study. Considering that the main purpose of this research study was to explore the contribution of contextualized workshops in developing oral communication and cultural

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awareness, I decided to conduct an action research approach, as it is consistent to my intervention. Mertler (2009) stated “it has the potential to empower teachers and engage them in the processes of educational improvement” (p. 9). This means that action research allows teachers to grow in their professional lives because it permits educators to reflect upon their practices. Furthermore, they can identify needs and obstacles in their contexts to make a plan to change those situations (Frost, 2002; Hopkins, 2008; Bassey, 1998; Bell, 2005; as cited in Costello, 2011). In few words, teachers have the possibility to improve the different difficulties in terms of teaching and learning processes.

Accordingly, this research study followed some phases to conduct this action research. The first one was identifying the problem; the second comprised designing and implementing a plan to find a solution; the third one gathered and analyzed data, and the fourth one evaluated the whole process (Stern, Townsend, Rauch, Schuster, 2014; Crouch, & Pearce, 2012). To this respect, I found that students had faced difficulties in their oral communication through the observation and field notes. Thus, I designed and implemented contextualized workshops with surface cultural content, I collected data through the instruments to analyze the information and to conclude I evaluated and reflected upon my pedagogical intervention.

Participants. The students participating in this research belonged to sixth grade. The entire group consisted of 36 children, 20 girls and 16 boys with ages between 12 to 14 years. However, the sample population was 10 students who were selected by “convenience sampling” technique since the researcher needed accessible participants (Stevens, 1996). Besides, their parents signed the consent form allowing them to participate in this study.

Moreover, students had three English hours per week and belonged to a beginner English level and although they knew some vocabulary, most of them did not use it to talk in English during their classes and some learners did not consider English important for their lives. Thus,

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there was a constant rejection to speak in the target language affecting negatively the way students perceive their performances in the English class.

Teacher-researcher and materials developer. During the research study, I performed three different roles: as a teacher, as a researcher and as a materials developer. As a teacher, I turned to be a facilitator since I guided students in the development of the activities and I explained each point of the workshops to help learner understand the tasks. As a researcher, I was part of the context being studied (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983), identified the learners' fallacies in the use of the language to accomplish this research and I used field notes, video recordings, and students' artifacts to collect and analyze data. As a materials developer, I designed two workshops on basis of the students' needs and interests, and according to the aim of the study to implement suitable materials, as an extension of being a language teacher (Graves, 1997; Núñez, 2010; Núñez & Téllez, 2009; Núñez et al. (2009), Tomlinson, 1988). As the previous roles enriched my classroom performance since I had the opportunity to think over different aspects involved in the teaching and learning processes.

Data gathering instruments. This section covers the instruments used to collect data to answer the research question: What do the development and implementation of contextualized workshops reveal about sixth graders' oral communication and their cultural awareness at a public school? In this regard, I gathered information through students' artifacts, field notes, and video-recordings. The previous instruments were piloted with a different group to check their effectiveness in the study

Students' artifacts. The workshops I developed served as primary sources of information as students could interact with time at first hand. Artifacts are the materials used as evidence to document and record personal information of the society, people or a culture (Given, 2008). Hence, the students' artifacts were the contextualized workshops that supported the research

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since those materials not only included the activities to promote oral communication, but also had the self-assessment format, which informed me about the participants' opinions regarding this pedagogical intervention.

Field notes. During the implementation of my research study, I was aware of the fact that I had to describe the behaviors or actions students were having when participating in class. This instrument "is a way of reporting, observations, reflections, and reactions to classroom problems" (Hopkins, 1993, p. 116). By means of this instrument, I registered important events during the implementation and development of the oral communication activities proposed in each workshop. In this regard, the field notes gave me the opportunity to describe the students' attitudes when they developed workshops since the idea was to observe the interaction among students to monitor the oral communication skill.

Video-recordings. As my purpose was to explore oral interaction and its micro-skills (lexical, communicative functions, body language), video recordings were necessary to record students' voice during their oral interventions when they had to express an opinion or to do any oral presentation regarding cultural issues. According to Hennink (2007), video recordings capture all the participants' speech and at a time, their facial expressions, and body movements. In this perspective, this instrument allowed me to record the precise moment when students were using their oral communication micro-skills in their interventions. Additionally, video recordings illustrated me the learners' views in terms of cultural awareness, especially in aspect that deal with topic like local festivals and tourist places. Bearing in mind that workshops involved cultural awareness, it is worth proceeding with the description of instructional design.

Surveys. The survey was important because it helped me identify the students' needs and interest in terms of cultural topics of interest, kind of learning activities, and oral communication and cultural awareness. In Pinsonneault and Kramer's (1993) words, the survey is a tool used to

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collect information about characteristics, actions, or opinions of people. In this regard, it was useful to start-gathering information in relation to the population's interest and preferences regarding the three theoretical constructs that inform this study.

Instructional Design

The instructional design contains the pedagogical intervention built according to the objectives established to develop suitable materials on the basis of SLA principles and innovation; the theory of language and language learning; the methodological approach underpinning the intervention; the connection between the research inquiry and the pedagogical intervention, and the instructional phases.

Pedagogical intervention. The pedagogical intervention consists on developing and implementing two contextualized workshops to foster sixth graders' oral communication and their cultural awareness in a public school. I considered some authors' insights (Bolitho, 2003; Graves, 1997; Harmer, 2007; Maley, 1998; Núñez & Téllez, 2009; Tomlinson, 1998) to create the abovementioned workshops. These authors deem materials development as the procedure whose outcome offers sources that facilitate the students' learning process. In the same line, materials development bears in mind different learners' styles to create an effective teaching and learning process (Núñez et al., 2009). In few words, materials are the resources that can be adapted or created to improve the teacher's role and students' learning.

Consequently, the contextualized workshops I created were informed by six SLA principles established by Tomlinson (as cited in Núñez et al., 2009). The first principle emphasizes on impacting students using attractive presentation (Barnard & Zemach, 2003; Ramírez, 2004) and striking content. The second suggests that learners should develop self-confidence to learn in a relaxed way; thus, teachers who integrate meaningful learning activities

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promote positive self-belief (Valentine, DuBois & Cooper 2004), supporting the development of self-concept, thereby fomenting self-confidence in doing or performing such activities. The third one refers to the relevance of the material and its usefulness to learners; as suggested by Ur (1996), teachers make materials “relevant to a particular group or students” (p. 185) and Hanemann (2015) attested that “learning materials which are relevant for learners ... are of utmost importance for the success of the learning process” (p. 44). The fourth principle states that students develop their self-investment through the materials; on this matter, Oxford (1997) highlighted the contribution of direct learning strategies to the learning of the language, as well as the contribution of indirect ones to learning in general. In the same breath, Chamot (1999) remarked the need for the conscious application of learning strategies and the overt instructional model of strategy instruction to guide students into resolution and completion of learning activities in an independent way. The fifth proposes learners’ exposure to the language to develop a strategic competence in relation to strategic ways of keeping conversation going. Canale and Swain (1980) affirmed that the speaker should have the ability to adapt their use of verbal and nonverbal language when communicative problems appear in the conversation. It refers to the lack of understanding of messages caused by the insufficient knowledge in grammar or social communication norms to maintain an effective communication. The sixth principle considers the need of evaluating materials to check if students are learning during the development of activities; with respect to evaluating materials, Donovan (1998) proposed piloting the material to get a feedback on the effectiveness of the different resources and tasks in regards to language acquisition.

These principles were fundamental to design effective contextualized workshops to foster the students’ oral communication micro-skills (lexical, communicative functions, body language) proposed by Brown (2001). By the same token, the workshops promoted learners’ cultural

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awareness of local celebrations, tourist places, food, dance, music, which was one of the main objectives of this study. Finally, it was necessary to account for the instructional objectives that were going to take place during my pedagogical intervention (Núñez et al., 2004), as these objectives represented the way students and I were going to achieve the research objectives.

Main instructional objective and specific objectives. The main objective of my intervention was to develop and implement contextualized workshops to improve oral communication micro-skills (lexical, body language, communicative functions) and cultural awareness. For doing so I considered important to state the following instructional specific objectives (a) to assess the suitability and effectiveness of the contextualized workshops. (b) To promote students' participation using contextualized workshops. (c) To create a comfortable learning space allowing students to develop three oral communication micro-skills. (d) To make students aware of the importance of developing three oral communication micro-skills (lexical, communicative functions, body language) and cultural awareness. (e) To provide students with vocabulary to communicate their views about topics related to cultural awareness.

Intervention as an innovation. Due to the nature of this study, it was important to highlight that innovation emerges for the teachers' practicums as the result of their reflections (Núñez, Téllez, & Castellanos, 2012). It means that teachers think over their performance to find appropriated pedagogical interventions to improve their teaching process to favor their students' learning outcomes. In this regard, Hannan and Silver (2001) state that an innovation impacts and contributes to the learning process as it offers changes in the moment of solving or improving educational problems by means of pedagogical strategies and learning approaches. Thus, as there was a learning need inside my EFL classroom, I decided to select the most appropriate pedagogical intervention for the population I was working with, considering their expectancies, lacks and context.

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More specifically, the development of contextualized workshops constitutes the main innovation of this study aimed at improving students' oral communication and cultural awareness. On this subject, Núñez et al. (2004), pointed out that “teachers as innovative professionals, have the potential to explore their creativity by designing materials for their classes” (p. 130), which allow teachers to develop “innovative teaching materials that address students' language learning needs and goals, increase attention, enhance motivation and boost effective learning” (Nuñez et al., 2012, p. 25). Therefore, the innovative integration of local cultural issues to the workshops proposed for the pedagogical intervention of this study may set the grounds for a more meaningful communication among students and the teacher, as well as for the recognition of students in the learning activities that address their own reality in an attempt to raise their cultural awareness.

An additional aspect to considered is the implication of teachers' innovation in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context. As contended by Núñez and Téllez (2015):

By giving participating teachers the opportunity to be informed about MD and develop contextualised materials for their pedagogical interventions, they expanded their knowledge of MD and grew as individuals and professionals. (p. 61)

On the same spirit, Nuñez et al. (2012) stated that “innovation has a major role in MD and that teacher-developed materials can be seen as an innovative practice in the EFL classroom” (p. 24). In light of the aforesaid arguments, the development and implementation of the pedagogical intervention of this study, implied a significant innovation in my EFL teaching context and in my pedagogical practice, since it has made me more sensitive and responsive to my student genuine needs, fomenting thereby both my personal and professional development.

Indeed, improving our pedagogical practices becomes a necessary endeavor to pursuit in the EFL classroom. Karavas (1998) claimed “educational innovations are planned to bring about

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improvement in classroom practice with the ultimate aim of enhance student achievement” (p. 28). It means that educational innovation occurs when there is a problem in terms of the teaching and learning processes, which requires a pertinent solution. As previously said, one main issue in my classroom was the difficulty and rejection students had for interacting using the target language what encouraged me to explore the possibilities I had to overcome that situation and start giving students opportunities to foster their oral communication and their cultural awareness.

My pedagogical intervention was an innovation because the contextualized workshops arose on basis of students’ environment related to their culture. The materials comprise topics that learners could identify in their context and children felt confident to speak of issues they knew. In this sense, Carless (2013) stated that materials are an innovation when they contribute to the field of the study. Thus, the workshops enriched materials development as a field of study and EFL teachers because, as stated by Núñez, Téllez and Castellanos (2017b) creating materials helps “them [teachers] refine their teaching decision-making process, [and] become innovative agents and attain teacher development” (p. 60). In fact, when teachers start reflecting on their own teaching, their population and their context, a need for improvement is created leading to personal and professional growth.

Theory of the nature of language and language learning. The vision of language that I chose to carry out my pedagogical intervention is culture and ideology perspective. It conceives the language as the “ability to interact with the culture and world view” (Tudor, 2001, p. 70). This theory focuses on the use of the language in context which was relevant when implemented the contextualized workshops I developed. Nevertheless, this pedagogical intervention required from the other three visions: a) *linguistic perspective*, which refers to grammar, vocabulary, discourse, phonological, among other aspects, (Cunningsworth 1995, as cited in Tudor, 2001); b)

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functional perspective, related to how the members of the community express their points of view (Hymes, 1972, as cited in Tudor, 2001); and c) *self-expression perspective*, emphasizing on building personal relationships. These visions were necessary because they intervened in the oral communication skills (lexical, communicative functions, body language) and because my aim was to encourage students to speak in English to communicate their views about topics related to culture awareness.

Moreover, the main vision of language learning is the “habit formation: developing automaticity” since it aids learners to communicate with confidence and become fluent, which was an essential factor to this research study (Tudor, 2001, p. 96). Another significant vision of learning, from Tudor (2001), is “experiential learning” because there is a constant use of the language for communicative purposes as the main goal for this research study was that students develop their oral communication skills (lexical, communicative function, body language). Thus, when learning a foreign language, developing “self-confidence, assurance and comprehension” depends on how meaningful and constant is the exposure learners have to the target language as this can lead to more appropriate language learning experiences (Tudor, 2001, p. 96).

Methodological approach underlying the pedagogical intervention. The methodological approach selected to develop the pedagogical intervention was the community-based pedagogy, which refers to the connection between the curriculum and students’ cultural context to create a significant learning process.

Sharkey (2012) argued:

Community-based pedagogies are curriculum and practices that reflect knowledge and appreciation of the communities in which schools are located and students and their families inhabit. It is an asset-based approach that does not ignore the realities of

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curriculum standards that teachers must address, but emphasizes local knowledge and resources as starting points for teaching and learning. (p. 11)

Hence, the community-based pedagogies approach deals with students' immediate context and reality, focusing on the meaningful issues that occur within the communities' students are part of, and the impact those issues have in their lives and in other members of the same community (Sharkey & Clavijo, 2012). In this regard, materials developers, who work with this approach, need to take into account the following stages suggested by Clavijo (2014):

- Mapping the physical context: It is to identify and document the resources that the community has. In this stage, students and teacher take photographs of the important places in their community.
- Understanding learning as a social practice within a community: It refers to teachers' preparation of lessons to help the community gain knowledge.
- Reflecting and identifying key aspects of community literacy practices: It is related to observe the needs and interests of the community in terms of learning.
- Establishing possible connections with the curriculum content: It means that the topics about the environment of the community have to be linked to the school curriculum.
- Reflecting upon the implications in the teaching process: It is to analyze if the strategy is working or if it is necessary to search or implement another to improve the learning process.

According to this, the community-based pedagogy connects to the contextualized workshops since this approach emphasizes on working with issues or topics that are around the community. Moreover, the aim of this method is to "facilitate the advancement of a context-sensitive language education based on a true understanding of local linguistic, sociocultural, and

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political particularities” (Kumaradivelu, 2001, p. 537). Hence, the community-based pedagogy represents an appropriate approach to improve teaching and learning because it takes students’ context as a primary source for learning.

Connection of the pedagogical intervention with the research question. This research study was focused on using contextualized lessons to develop oral communication and cultural awareness. Besides, the objective of the pedagogical intervention was to develop and implement contextualized workshops to improve oral communication micro-skills (lexical, body language, communicative functions) and cultural awareness. Richards (2005) argued “the primary relevance of language and language learning research to materials development is through its application to syllabus design issues as a source for instructional principles that can inform the design of instructional materials” (p. 18). In this sense, the students developed two workshops, each one with five lessons, including cultural topics related to the school curriculum, and the aim was encouraging them to use the material to start communicating their ideas in an oral way. Furthermore, the community-based pedagogy focused on working with issues that were part of the students’ environment and that helped them reflect on their community using English as a way to communicate with others. In few words, the pedagogical intervention was relevant as it provided me with relevant information that helped me to nurture my research study and the implementation itself.

Suggested phases. For developing this research study, I considered four main phases. In the first phase, I informed myself about the different frameworks related to MD with the purpose of proposing my own. During the second phase, I asked for permission to the school’s Principal and the students’ parents and delivered the consent form. During the third phase, I sensitized my students about what I was going to do my research study about and its implications to language learning and finally, during the fourth stage I implemented my contextualized workshops with

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my students. Accordingly, all phases I proposed contributed to improve my research study as represented key elements when conducting research in my context.

Proposed materials development framework. Acknowledging the nature of this study, I will first give account for the need for a materials development framework or scaffolding process. As sustained by Núñez et al. (2004), “Materials could lack a solid rationale is they are not constructed considering principles in which the teacher believes. It is by combining their theoretical background and their teaching experience in the development of materials that they create positive conditions for language learning. A combination of experience and theoretical background could guarantee a better developed product” (p.131). On the same spirit, for Núñez et al. (2012), “The MD framework [served] as a guide for in-service teachers to build up their instructional design capabilities for their research projects” (p. 19). Furthermore, Núñez, Téllez and Castellanos (2017a) highlighted:

It [the MD framework] engages in-service teachers in acting upon two sets of circumstances: aligning the materials of their pedagogical interventions to those they are already using, or developing new materials for their pedagogical interventions to be implemented in the EFL classes. It also promotes reflection regarding both what they know about their particular teaching contexts and what they know about language, learning, and teaching. (pp. 23-24)

In general, the theoretical framework helped me, as a novice materials developer, structure the two workshops, composed of five lessons each, I created for the pedagogical intervention of this study, which in turn made me more aware of the contextual needs of my students and of the localized possibilities for approaches in language teaching and learning,

There are diverse frameworks to develop materials, which I contrast and compare in the table below.

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Table 1

Materials Frameworks – Comparative Table

N a m e	Framework of components	Course design	Procedure	Framework for materials writing	The process of Course and Material Design	Essential components in the process of creating and adapting Materials	The Materials Development Scaffolding Scenario 2
A u t h o r	Graves (1996)	Masuhara (1998)	Jolly and Bolitho (1998)	Núñez, Pineda, and Téllez (2004)	Núñez and Téllez (2009)	Núñez, Téllez, Castellanos, and Ramos (2009)	Núñez, Téllez and Castellanos (2012)
S i m i l a r i t i e s	Needs assessment Defines goals and objectives Conceptualizing content Selecting and developing materials Consideration of resources and constraints Organization of content and activities Evaluation	Needs analysis Determine the goals and objectives Syllabus design Methodology of the materials Testing and evaluating	Identification of needs Identification of a problem Contextual realization of the proposed materials Pedagogical realization of materials finding appropriate exercises and activities Physical production	Needs analysis Objectives Which skills should materials aim at? Selection and sequence (tasks, content) Learning-teaching and activities Assessment and evaluation of goals achieved.	Needs assessment Selecting goals and objectives Content Resources and constraints Selecting and developing materials and activities Organizing content and activities Evaluation	Needs assessment and analysis Developing the material (anything teachers want to do: create or adapt) Revising and evaluating the materials Piloting the materials Making adjustments	Needs assessment Identifying the method and the approach underlying the materials Selecting goals and objectives Selecting and organizing Content Organizing activities Assessing Trialling Making adjustments

Note. This is adapted from Munevar (2017).

Authors like (Graves, 1996; Masuhara, 1998; Jolly and Bolitho, 1998; Núñez et al., 2004; Núñez and Téllez, 2009; Núñez et al., 2009; and Núñez et al., 2012) in part coincide on needs, objectives, methodological approach, the content, revision, and evaluating the materials. On the

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other hand, Graves (1996) adds the resources and constrains; Masuhara (1998) sums the design of a syllabus; Jolly and Bolitho (1998) includes the identification of a problem and the contextual realization of the proposed new materials; Núñez et al. (2004) incorporate the learning and teaching activities. Núñez and Téllez (2009) consider resources and constraints; and Núñez et al. (2009) and Núñez et al. (2012) insert making adjustments. Accordingly, I proposed the following MD framework as part of the innovation that my research study has within the language teaching community:

Table 2

Setting a Framework for My Context

<i>Student's community</i>	In this phase, students selected the topics associated to their context to start identifying their interests.
<i>Relating local culture to the syllabus</i>	In this stage, I connected the students' likes to the syllabus and the school approach, which is the communicative competence to align the workshops to the English subject.
<i>Analyzing the effectiveness of cultural materials</i>	In this phase, I piloted the workshops and made adjustments taking into account some students considerations and my practicums reflections.
<i>Cultural awareness understanding</i>	In this stage, I focused on the students' communicative activities, in which they show their own reflection on their community and their own culture.

Informed consent. In this phase, I asked the permission from the Principal of the school and the students' parents through a consent letter. For this reason, the students participating in this research project presented a format signed by their parents (See Appendix A).

Sensitization. During this phase, I informed the students the importance to start to communicate their ideas in an oral way. Furthermore, it was necessary to ask them to reflect on the different cultural topics of their community to help them become integral individuals.

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Implementation of the material. During this stage, and based on the needs analysis survey and the school's curriculum, I designed and implemented my contextualized workshops. In this process, students started handling the workshops and getting used to their content and activities, meanwhile I was in charge of implementing my data collection instruments and guide students along the process of oral communication.

Sample of workshop

Workshop N° 2

Puerto Gaitan's
festivals

*What are the
most popular
festivals in
Puerto Gaitan?*



General Objective: To state and express the advantages and disadvantages of festivals in Puerto Gaitan for the community's development.

❖ *Specific Objectives*

- a) To describe people's behavior exhibited during Puerto Gaitan's festivals (gastronomy preferences/ typical food, typical costumes, social activities, musical shows), b) to use lexical units (words) related to Puerto Gaitan's festivals, c) to express points of view about the positive or negative aspects of festivities for the people in their community.



Lesson 1

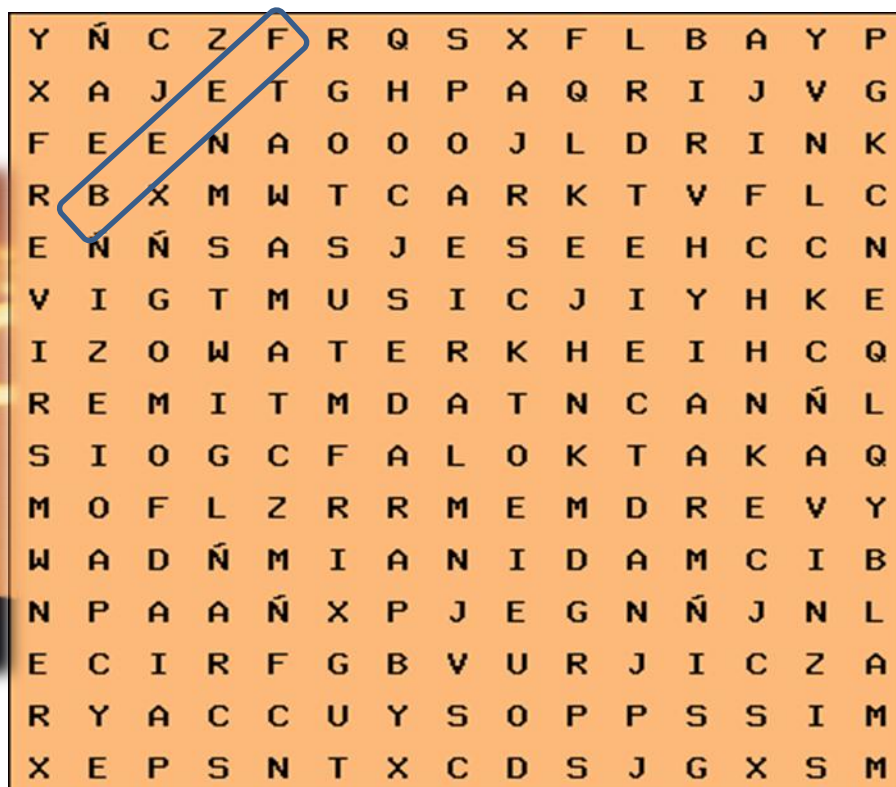
Festivals' typical food and peoples' gastronomy preferences

1. Underline the words that are related to food and find them in puzzle.



Learning strategy: Relating new language information to previous knowledge.

<u>Beef</u>	Car	Money	Rice	Sugar
Dance	Cornmeal	Salt	Shows	Water
Chicken	Potatoes	Miss	Cheese	Parades
Yucca	Music	River	Drink	Economy



WORKSHOPS, ORAL COMMUNICATION, AND CULTURAL AWARENESS

2. Read the descriptions of typical food and match them to correct picture.



- a) My favorite food has rice, chicken, pork, beef, cornmeal, and it is in banana leaves.



- b) We like grilled beef with potato and yucca.



- c) I prepare this food with rice, cheese and it is wrapped in leaves.



- d) I like this drink because it has rice, water and, panela



C

Rice envueltos



Hallacas

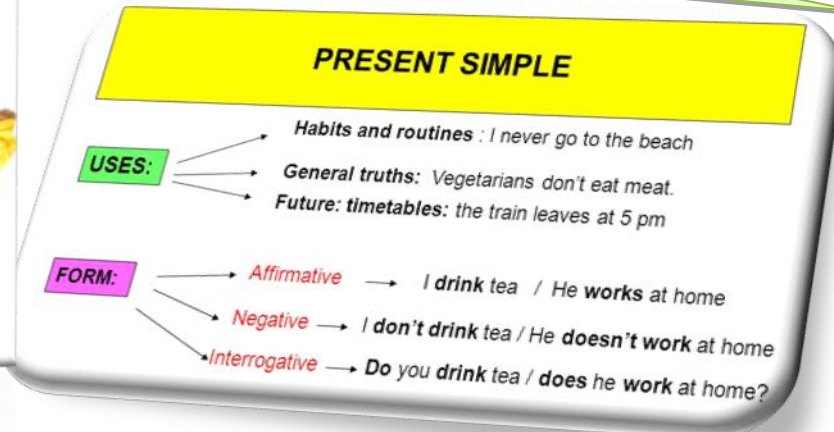
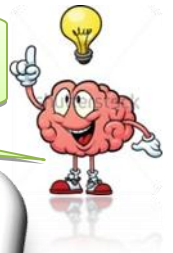


Mamona



Masato

Learning strategy: Classifying English language grammatical rules.



3 . Complete the dialogue and monologue using the verbs provided in the Present Simple tense. Study them and practice them with a friend:

a. Carlos : Hello, Bob! Where do you _____? (go)
 Bob : I go to the summer festival with my sister.
 Carlos: I _____ (go) there, too.
 Bob : It's nice . what _____ you _____(like) of this festival?
 Carlos: I _____(like) the typical food, shows, activities, and contests.
 Bob: What _____(be) your favorite typical food? Because my mother
 _____ (know) to prepare masato.
 Carlos: it is delicious! But my favorite food _____(be) hallacas and
 my sister _____(love) eating mamona.
 Carlos: Mamona ____ (be) the most famous food from the Meta
 deparment. I ____ (hope) to see you in Puerto Gaitan. Good Bye!

b. Hello, my name ____ (be) Virginia Rocha. I ____ (sing) llanera music. I
 _____ (enjoy) to visit Puerto Gaitan for the Cachama's festivals with my
 husband because he _____ (eat) fish and envueltos and I ____ (not/like) the
 envueltos, I like mamona, hallacas, and masato. Besides, we _____ (try) to
 observe the different activities of this festival because I _____ (not have) time
 since I _____ (participate) in other events.

4. Answer the following questions with the previous people's interventions.

- a. What is the most famous food from the llano? _____
- b. What is the festival that Bob goes? _____
- c. What does Virginia Rocha like eating? _____
- d. What is the Carlos' favorite typical food? _____



Lesson 2

Social activities

1. Read the text carefully.

Learning strategy: Scanning the text for specific or detailed information.

**Puerto Gaitan's Festivals**

Festivals are the major inversion of our town and its mayor. The Manacacias summer and Cachama festivals offer good economy to the gaitanenses because foreign people arrive from different parts of Colombia or other countries. One of the most popular festivities of the Meta department is the summer festival because it offers different activities that people can do to enjoy their stay in this “natural paradise”. Visitors during the first festival, which is celebrated in January, can see the different concerts of national and international singers, listen to llanera music and buy handicrafts of the Orinoquia region, swim in the Manacacias river, eat typical food, and practice sports related to summer season as volleyball and cross country, among others since the mayor changes the main sport every year.

Consequently, the Cachama festival, which is celebrated in May and its name is due to one fish. In this sense, the festivity searches that several fishers participate catching the biggest cachama to obtain the prize. Besides in this event, foreign and native people can enjoy of different activities such as the parade float, misses, contests, musical shows, gastronomy, typical dances, among other things. Moreover, people take photographs with the sikuni indigenous or buy their products and objects.

However, there are bad things that harm both festivities. For instance, there are some people who enjoy the festivals in the river with alcoholic drinks and some of them change their behavior negatively because they start fights or throw litter since they are drunk. Another negative aspect is that thieves take advantage to steal houses or people on the street. Although, those events are the best opportunity for the community because it gets money and the tourism begins to grow in Puerto Gaitán.



WORKSHOPS, ORAL COMMUNICATION, AND CULTURAL AWARENESS

1. Write true (T) or false (F) according to the reading.

- a. The summer festival is in June. F
- b. Fishers catch the biggest cachamas in May. _____
- c. People swim in the Meta river. _____
- d. Both festivals are in Puerto Lopez. _____
- e. People practice different sports every year. _____
- f. Thieves steal in both festivals. _____
- g. Visitors buy food in festivals. _____

2. Select the correct option taking into account the text.

- a. The person who fishes the biggest cachama, she or he obtains...
☐ an alcohol beverage. ☐ food
☒ an award ☐ a lottery
- b. The underlined word "natural paradise" can be replaced by...
☐ department ☐ Meta
☐ town ☐ Puerto Gaitán
- c. The cachama is a...
☐ person ☐ sport
☐ fish ☐ place
- d. What kind of activities do people do in festivals?
☐ Dance ☐ Buy handcrafts
☐ Eat ☐ All above
- e. Do people throw thrush at floor?
☐ Yes, they does ☐ Yes, they do
☐ No, they don't ☐ No, they doesn't
- f. Visitors see parade floats in...
☐ Summer festival ☐ Manacias summer festival
☐ Both festivals ☐ Cachama's festival

3. Write the main idea of the previous reading and share it with a classmate.

The main idea of text is.....

Lesson 3

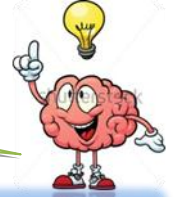
Writing activities







Typical costumes

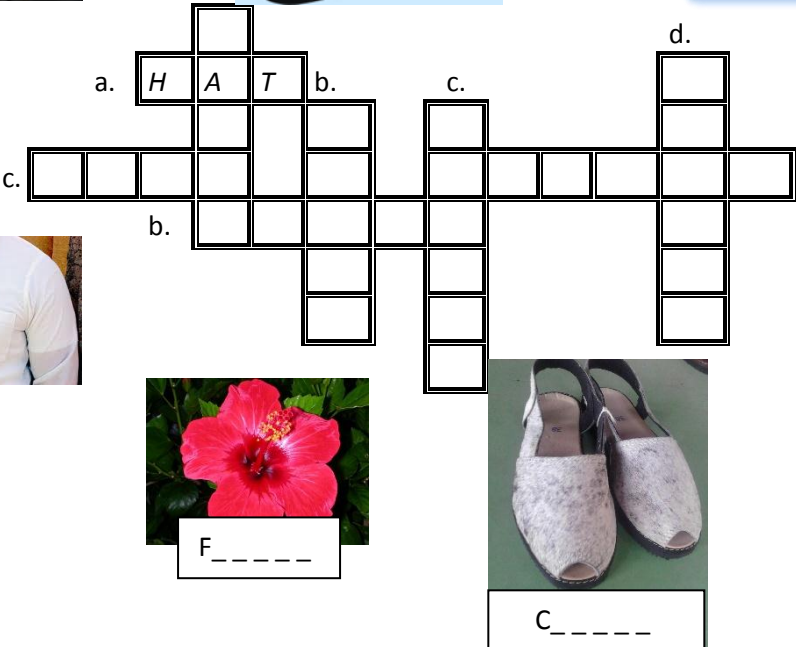
1. Complete the crossword taking into account the images and clues.



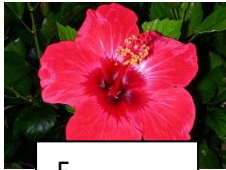


Learning strategy: Associating words with your knowledge



P _ _ _ _
 P _ _ _ _
 H A I
 S _ _ _ _

a.  d.
 a. H A T b. c.
 c. d. ←
 b.

S _ _ _ _
 F _ _ _ _
 C _ _ _ _
 B _ _ _

CROSS

- The man uses it in his head.
- It has colorful flowers or landscapes and women wear it.
- It is a leather strap that men wear.
- This is a garment made of a thick piece of cloth with a slit in the middle for the head.

DOWN

- Men wear this garment to cover their legs.
- The man and the woman use it.
- The llanero shoes.
- It adorns the head of the woman.

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e. Complete the short text with the following words.

Word bank

dresses - jacket - presentations -
pockets - lace - colors - costumes -
music - nature - buttons - trousers.



Fantasy costumes

These dresses are for _____. The man uses a liqui-liqui that is composed by a _____ and _____. The jacket has five or six _____, and may or may not have _____ (if so, no more than four). The woman wears a dress with _____ and attractive _____ that represent the _____ of the llanura. People wear those _____ to dance Joropo (typical dance of the llano) or sing llanera _____.

f. Observe the picture and write a short description about the costumes.



They wear traditional llanera clothes. For example, she uses **an** antique skirt with flowers and **a** white shirt. The man has black pants, **a** white shirt and **a** brown hat. They have cotizas.

Learning strategy: activate your background knowledge



Remember!

When there's a consonant sound after.

A or An

A house

An apple

When there's a vowel sound after.

Blank lines for writing a short description about the costumes.



Lesson 4

Musical shows

Listening activities



Pre- listening

1. Listen to the song and fill the gaps with words that are in the box. Ask to your teacher about the pronunciation of words.

Learning strategy: Inferring listening



Waiting, we, *Oceans*, baby, stop, times, crazy, line, heart, tears, romance

I WILL BE RIGHT HERE WAITING FOR YOU

(Bryan Adams)

Oceans apart, day after day
And I slowly go insane
I hear your voice, on the _____
But it doesn't _____ the pain
If I see you next to never
how can _____ say forever

(chorus)

Wherever you go, whatever you do
I will be right here, _____ for you
Whatever it takes, or how my _____ breaks
I will be right here waiting for you

I took for granted, all The _____
That I thought would last somehow
I hear the laughter, I taste the _____
But I can't get near you now
Oh can't you see it _____,
You've got me going _____

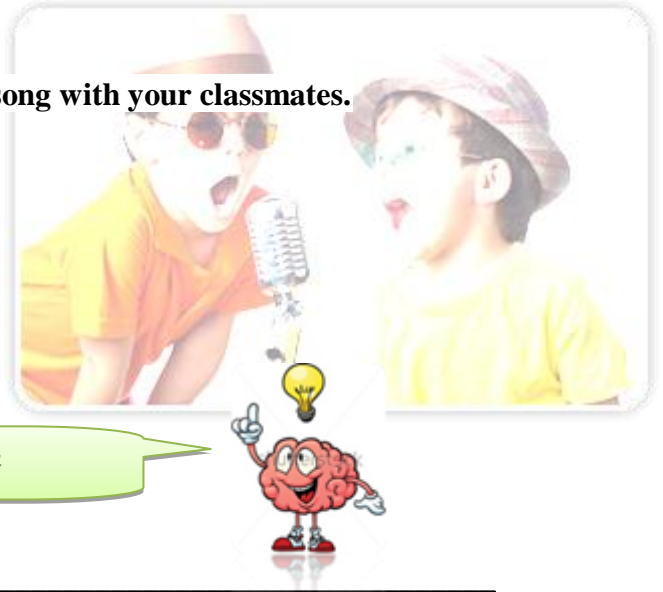
(chorus)

I wonder how we can survive, this _____
But in the end if I'm with you, I'll take the chance

Oh you can't see it baby
You've got me going crazy

Retrieved from: <https://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/richardmarx/rightherewaiting.html>

2. **Imagine that you are in a concert and sing the song with your classmates.**



3. **What is the message of the song?**

Learning strategy: Express your opinion

The message is ...

4. **Pay attention to the audio recording about the musical shows in Puerto Gaitán and answer the next questions:**

- a. *Are the musical shows in Puerto Gaitán the best in Colombia?*

Yes, they are _____

No, they aren't ✓

- b. *Who is the person that invites singers?*

Governor _____

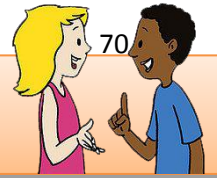
Mayor _____

President _____

Community _____

- c. *What kind of music do people listen in the festivals?*

- d. *What is the typical music of the llano?*



Lesson 5

Advantages and disadvantages of festivals

Pre- Speaking

1. Work in pairs to try to infer the pronunciation of the words and match them.
Follow the below example.

Learning strategy: Inferring pronunciation



a. Festivals	(<u>b</u>) /'mju:zɪk/	<p>Key</p> <p>You can use the following expressions:</p> <p>Student 1: I think that the pronunciation of this _____ is _____</p> <p>Student 2: I don't agree. It is _____</p> <p>-I agree.</p>
b. Music	() /'tʊərɪsts/	
c. Typical food	() /ɪ'vent/	
d. Sports	() /kə'mju:nəti/	
e. Tourists	() /'tʊpɪk(ə)l/ /fu:d/	
f. Events	() /'mʌni/	
g. Singers	() /sti:l/	
h. Community	() /'gɑ:(r)bɪdʒ/	
i. Money	() /ɪ'kɒnəmi/	
j. Garbage	() /'festɪv(ə)ls/	
k. Alcohol	() /'æl·kə·hɒl/	
l. Steals	() /spɔ:ts/	
m. Economy	() /fəʊklɔ:r/	
n. folclor		

2. Observe the next video about the summer festival in 2011
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uomJPFilFAM>) and answer the below questions:

Learning strategy: Using vocabulary in the context



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- What did you see in the video?
- What places do you know?
- How many singers did you see?
- What sports did you watch?

Key*Use expressions like:**I saw.....**I didn't see....**I know....**I couldn't see...**I watched....**For instance:**I could see.....**I saw famous singers!***While- speaking**

- Discuss with one classmate about the actions that people usually do in the different festivals.

Learning strategy: Expressing short ideas.

*Example:**Student 1: Tourists buy typical food**Student 2: Steals arrive to the community*

- Organize a group of six people to play mime. Teacher has a bag with different activities that people do in festivities and one person of the group takes a piece of paper to represent that action and his or her group has one minute to guess.

For example: People drink alcohol

Learning strategy: Using gestures for communicative

**Word bank**

throw garbage
drink alcohol

swim
sing

dance
go to the concerts

eat typical food
observe typical dances

fight
steal

Post –speaking

5. Work in groups to oorganize a diagram with advantages and disadvantages of festivals taking into account the whole previous activities and your experiences. Follow the example below.

Learning strategy: Making an arrangement of words into a picture.



Advantage: Any state, circumstance, opportunity, or means especially favorable to success, interest, or any desired end

Disadvantage: The state or an instance of being in an unfavorable circumstance or condition

Retrieved from: <http://www.dictionary.com/browse/>

Key

You can use these expressions:

I consider an/a

I think that...

A positive aspect is...

A negative aspect is...

Student 1: *I consider an advantage that the economy grows in the festivals.*



6. Answer the following questions orally and share with your group (you can use your body to express ideas).

Learning strategy: Developing cultural understanding.

- What is the importance of festivals for the community's development?
- Do you think that festivals show the llanera culture? Why?
- Do you feel proud of your town and community? Why?
- Do festivals allow that foreign people recognize your community and culture? Why?
- Do you consider that your culture is important? Why?
- Do you take care of your town in festivals? How?
- How do you develop a festival that has more positive aspects than negative ones?



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Self-assessment



My workshop... Mi taller...	It does	It can be better
has different oral communication activities. <i>tiene diferentes actividades de comunicación oral.</i>		
contains images that are appealing to eyesight. <i>contiene imágenes que son llamativas para la vista.</i>		
promotes self-confidence by doing understandable and sequenced tasks. <i>promueve auto-confianza por medio de la realización de tareas comprensibles and secuenciadas.</i>		
has tasks that promote my self-discovery and self-investment. <i>Posee tareas que promueven mi auto-descubrimiento y auto-investigación.</i>		
has clear instructions. <i>tiene instrucciones claras.</i>		
contains activities and topics that are interesting and useful for me and my classmates. <i>contiene actividades y temas que son interesantes y útiles para mí y mis compañeros.</i>		
To develop my oral communication microskills... Para desarrollar mis micro-habilidades de la comunicación oral...		
I use an adequate number of lexical units (words) in order to accomplish a good communication. <i>uso un adecuado número de unidades lexicales (palabras) para lograr una buena comunicación.</i>		
I use various strategies in my communication such as pauses, self-corrections, and backtracking to enhance the clarity of the message. <i>Utilizo varias estrategias en mi comunicación como pausas, auto-correcciones y retrocesos para mejorar la claridad del mensaje.</i>		
I convey messages through facial features, kinesis, body language, and other nonverbal cues along with verbal language. <i>Transmito mensajes a través de expresiones faciales, kinestesia, lenguaje corporal y otras señales no verbales acompañando el lenguaje verbal.</i>		
fostering my cultural awareness... fortalecer mi conciencia cultural...	I do	I can improve
allows me to think about the advantages and disadvantages of the festivals to the community's development <i>me permite pensar acerca de las ventajas y desventajas que traen los festivales para el desarrollo de mi comunidad.</i>		
Fosters my vocabulary related to festivals, people's behaviors and customs in the parties. <i>me fortalece el vocabulario relacionado con festivales y las costumbres y comportamientos de las personas en las fiestas.</i>		
allows me to describe the people's behaviors and customs during the festivals. <i>me permite describir las costumbres y comportamientos de las personas durante las fiestas.</i>		
helps me to expose short arguments about the positive or negative aspects of festivities for the people in their community. <i>me ayuda a exponer argumentos cortos sobre los aspectos positivos o negativos de las festividades para las personas en su comunidad.</i>		

Note. Designed by author based on Munevar (2017).

WORKSHOPS, ORAL COMMUNICATION, AND CULTURAL AWARENESS

Images selected from:

- ✓ https://www.google.com.co/search?q=puerto+gaitan&dc=0&source=lnms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjxjYy68aHaAhWktVvKHC5cB6wQ_AUIDCgD&biw=1366&bih=662#imgsrc=CUJzX9p35UZELM:
- ✓ https://www.google.com.co/search?dc=0&biw=1366&bih=662&tbm=isch&sa=1&ei=GnDFWoX8J87H5gKsg5tA&q=llanero&oq=llanero&gs_l=psy-ab.3..0l10.2622.3218.0.4325.2.2.0.0.0.268.502.2-2.2.0....0...1c.1.64.psy-ab..0.2.500...0i13k1.0.eeMr3Si5ccA#imgsrc=NH79RqmFz2iu1M:
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- ✓ https://www.google.com.co/search?dc=0&biw=1366&bih=662&tbm=isch&sa=1&ei=wHTFWr3ANq_s5gL56b24AQ&q=festival+del+Manacias&oq=festival+del+Manacias&gs_l=psy-ab.3...171237.190886.0.191807.39.23.0.4.4.0.416.3158.0j13j2j0j1.17.0....0...1c.1.64.psy-ab..18.17.2626.0..0j0i67k1j0i30k1j0i24k1.582.f73TAqAep8#imgsrc=fcZQxeFGc169yM:
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- ✓ https://www.google.com.co/search?dc=0&biw=1366&bih=662&tbm=isch&sa=1&ei=UHbFWu67Loi45gKP873gAg&q=pareja+llanera+bailando&oq=pareja+llanera+bailando&gs_l=psy-ab.3...76790.200788.0.202061.38.31.0.0.0.0.250.3825.0j16j5.23.0....0...1c.1.64.psy-ab..15.17.3199.0..0j0i67k1j0i8i30k1j0i30k1.242.i77AWKiLYww#imgsrc=ajELuspwOXqTgM:
- ✓ https://www.google.com.co/search?dc=0&biw=1366&bih=662&tbm=isch&sa=1&ei=HnjFWtrNOuXM5gLz0pfoBQ&q=cerebro+animado&oq=cerebro+animado&gs_l=psy-ab.3..0l10.18303.20323.0.20924.8.8.0.0.0.398.1221.2-1j3.4.0....0...1c.1.64.psy-ab..4.4.1218...0i67k1.0.fDI6Quu1E4I#imgsrc=s65aJWsw_5B8KM:
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- ✓ Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uomJPFilFAM>
- ✓ Lirycs: <https://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/richardmarx/rightherewaiting.html>

Chapter IV

Data Analysis

In the previous chapter, I described the methodological and the instructional designed proposed for this qualitative action research. This chapter refers to the data analysis procedure used to interpret the data collected through the following instruments: contextualized lessons, teacher's field notes, and video/audio recordings. Besides, according to the data provided, I managed to establish my research categories and subcategories based on my research question.

Data Analysis Procedure

At first, I started to apply the instruments to collect my data: contextualized workshops, field notes, video recordings, and a final self-assessment survey. I used the field notes to register the most relevant information in terms of the activities and I made videos to record the students' interventions and attitudes in the different lessons. Second, I used the final self-assessment survey to obtain more specific data about the whole implementation of the workshops. Finally, after having this information, I transcribed the videos to describe students' behaviors or postures towards the development of the exercises in each lesson.

As a point of departure, I decided to use the grounded approach to analyze my data. As state by Strauss and Corbin (1997), "grounded theory methodology and methods (procedures) are now among the most influential and widely used modes of carrying out qualitative research when generating theory is the researcher's principal aim" (p. 7). The authors further considered (as cited in Carrero & Soriano, 2006), that the grounded approach is also the process of the transformation of the qualitative data in research categories through the reading and re-reading of the instruments to identify common patterns. It means that this approach helped me to interpret the information gathered in the instruments to find commonalities among them, bearing in mind the purpose of this research.

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After doing so, I implemented the color-coding technique to start classifying my data. This technique allowed me to identify the common patterns in the instruments to categorize the information. Marshall and Rossman (2006) mentioned that color-coding is a useful tool to define the categories specially for writing the final product of the research. In the same vein, Klein (2012) argued “color coding allows for the visual organization of data and for seeing categories and subcategories very clearly” (p. 62); and Charmaz (2006) affirmed that “coding is the pivotal link between collecting data and developing an emergent theory to explain this data” (p. 46). It means that, the researcher can use different colors to systematize the information and establish the categories and subcategories.

What is more, after having organized and classified my data, I started to concentrate on how that data was evident along my data collection instruments. Hence, data triangulation became an essential part of the data analysis process because it is the systematic process where the data is analyzed from different directions. So, data triangulation uses several data instruments to corroborate the outcomes (Boswell & Cannon, 2011). In the same line, for Flick (2009) triangulation “is used to name the combination of different methods, study groups, local and temporal settings, and different theoretical perspectives in dealing with a phenomenon... it can also be an approach to do qualitative research in an appropriate way” (p. 444). As its name indicates this procedure needs at least three instruments for taking the common patterns among them. For this reason, this qualitative research was based on three instruments for gathering data: artifacts (workshops), field notes, and video recordings.

In qualitative research, there are several types of triangulation. In relation to types of triangulation, Flick (2009) further asserted that the process of triangulation, implies taking “different perspectives on an issue under study” (Flick, 2009, p. 445). For instance, investigator triangulation, which includes having different observers for the same phenomenon; theory

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triangulation, which comprises several theoretical foundations to address the issue; methodological triangulation, which involves mixing methods in the data gathering instruments to guarantee the validity; and data triangulation, which entails using several data sources. Due to the features of this study, I conducted two types of triangulation, the theoretical and the methodological ones.

It is important to mention that despite I develop a qualitative research study, there is a need to show numeric data as it helps to give credibility to my research study. To this respect, Berg (2004) stated “Any information the investigator gathers can potentially be used to answer the questions or solve the problems that have been identified” (p. 199). Thus, for the purpose of answering my research question it was important to fit part of my data into a numeric analysis as this contributed to get a clear idea of what was happening in the EFL classroom in relation to oral communication and cultural awareness. Finally, and after having to develop my process of analysis, I established three categories and eight sub-categories, which are presented in the next table.

Table 3

Categories and subcategories

Research question	Categories	Sub-categories
What do the development and implementation of contextualized workshops reveal about sixth graders?	Contextualized appealing materials to enhance students' meaningful learning	<p>Relevance of localized colorful pictures to motivate students to learn in a meaningful way</p> <p>Using examples to understand the activities and to construct successful communication</p> <p>The sequenced activities or lessons enhance the students' learning development.</p>

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oral communication and their cultural awareness in a public school?	Oral communication as a vehicle to express ideas or feelings.	Fostering communication with body movements Strengthening communication through the acquisition of vocabulary Building new ideas or concepts by sharing points of view and feelings
	Developing students' cultural awareness by means of knowing their own culture.	Cultural growth through cultural knowledge Thinking over the actions to protect culture

Research categories

Considering that this research study aimed at exploring the contribution of contextualized workshops in developing oral communication and cultural awareness, it was pertinent to understand my data from three different categories. The samples and data selected to support my analysis represent what my research study entailed and its relevance towards the student's learning process.

Contextualized appealing materials to enhance students' meaningful learning. This category is relevant since it is related to the field of materials development. According to Núñez and Téllez (2009), "MD entails a rational process and artistic inspiration that together perform a central role in attaining appealing teaching-learning resources" (p. 175). For Núñez et al. (2017a), "Teacher-developed materials fit into the category of contextualised materials that are context-bound since they are responsive to local needs" (p. 34). In this sense, the materials with attractive local content help students improve their learning process because they recognize themselves in the materials and feel motivated about the colorful pictures and meaningful activities related to their immediate reality. Therefore, the two contextualized workshops were appropriate and useful

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as they helped students to enhance their learning process as they considered the students' needs and interests, and their local cultural surrounding.

Moreover, students took advantage of the different activities and examples of the workshops to start to foster their oral communication skill. In this sense, this category is divided in three sub-categories: *the relevance of localized colorful pictures to motivate students to learn in a meaningful way, using examples to understand the activities and to construct successful communication, and the sequenced activities or lessons enhance the students' learning development.*

The relevance of localized colorful pictures to motivate students to learn in a meaningful way. The name of this subcategory arises from the impact that workshops, especially the pictures or images, had in the students' learning. Tomlinson (1998) mentioned that "materials achieve impact when they have a noticeable effect on learners, especially when the learner's curiosity, interest and attention are attracted...through...appealing content" (p. 8). In addition to that, Warburton and Martin (1999) stressed on the importance of local knowledge since it "is a collection of facts and relates to the entire system of concepts, beliefs and perceptions that people hold about the world around them (p. 10). As contended by Nuñez et al. (2004)," Materials should explore ... the contexts they are embedded in" (p.132). Thus, the different localized images and pictures of both workshops played an important role in the students' improvement towards the development of their oral communication and cultural awareness since several photographs were taken in the mapping stage. The contextualized colorful pictures motivated students to learn because they observed familiar images that increase their enthusiasm. For instance, when students received materials the first time:

The session starts with explanation of the class... students received the material and observed it. They saw the first image and they identified some classmates saying their names, they were excited with the material about known places. [*sic*]

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(Field notes-workshop 1)

As noticed, it was evident that the materials had a positive impact in students since they were excited when they saw the pictures and expressed it describing the first image in the workshop. Similarly, the images helped students identify some important places and learning in a meaningful way because they could relate the pictures to the different words that appeared in the workshops. For example, in the workshop 1, they had to identify the places that they knew in their town as it is seen in the following excerpt.

Today we are going to start with a workshop number 1 that is about Puerto Gaitan's tourist places. The first question is: What is this place?

Sx: the arch

T: thanks Betancourt. What people do you see in the photo?

Students: Melany, Valentina, Karen, Ronald, Jerson, Shaira, Camila, Kevin, Laura ... the first lesson is about grammar and vocabulary. Repeat after me! A) park

Students: A) park

T: B) church

Students: B) church

T: C) swimming pool

Students: C) Swimming pool

T: D) Farm

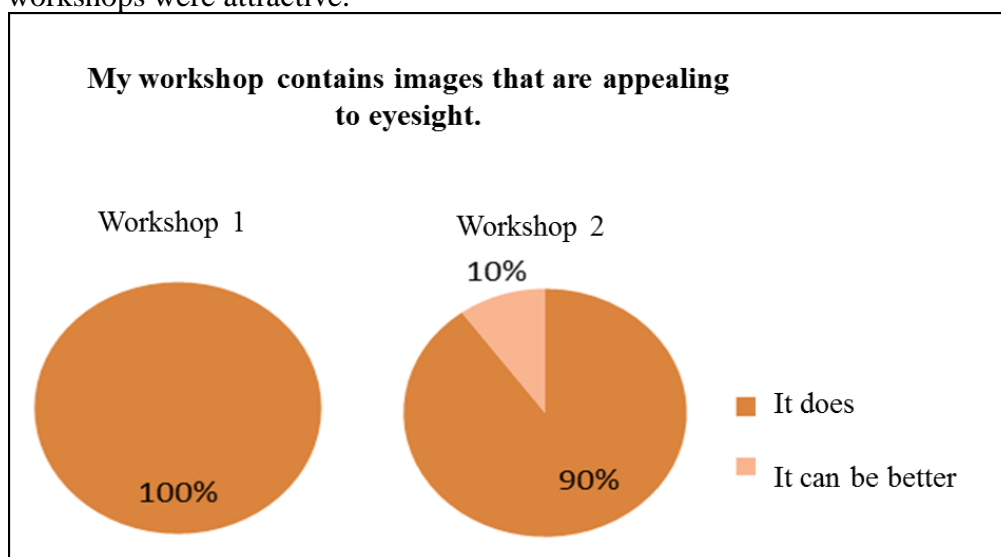
Students: D) Farm

T: E) hotel

Students: E) hotel" [sic]

(Video recording transcription-workshop 1)

In the previous transcription, the students took advantage of the colorful pictures since they had the opportunity to see the image and pronounce the word. Moreover, most students affirmed that the workshops were attractive.



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Figure 2. Self-assessment sections (appealing material)

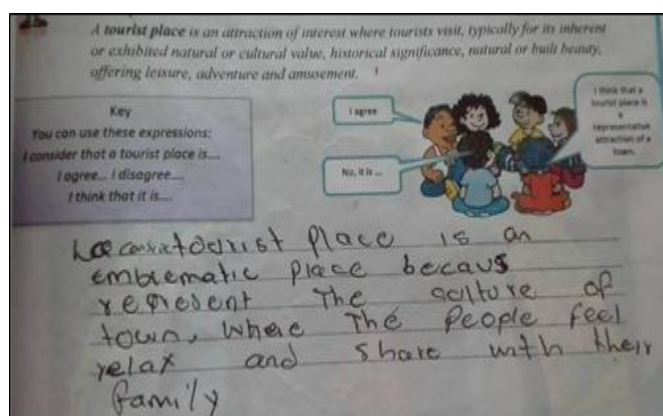
The students' self-assessment corroborated that the images were attractive for them. The first workshop was more appealing than the second one because the percentage in the first was 100% and in the second was 90%. In sum, the colorful pictures are important to design materials since they catch the students' attention to motivate them to learn new vocabulary or topics. To continue with, is important to analyze the role examples and modeling have toward students' oral communication development.

Using examples to understand the activities and to construct successful communication.

This sub-category emerged from the results of the students' workshops as it was evident that most of them followed some examples presented in the workshops as a way to nurture their oral communication. In this regard, they used some models exposed in some activities to have an idea about how to start their writing or communication. Erneling (1993) stated that "the teacher does not convey knowledge but giving the pupil an explicit rule, definition or explanation but more indirectly shows the pupil by presenting relevant examples or paradigm cases" (p. 125). It means that examples show students the parameters for starting their compositions or interventions. Thus, they took advantage from examples created by the teacher to elaborate a more real or authentic text.

Students took advantage of the examples provided in the lesson. For instance: Robin said "*I consider that a tourist place is where the people can relax in family*". The student followed the example when he used the phrase "*I consider that a tourist place is*" [sic]

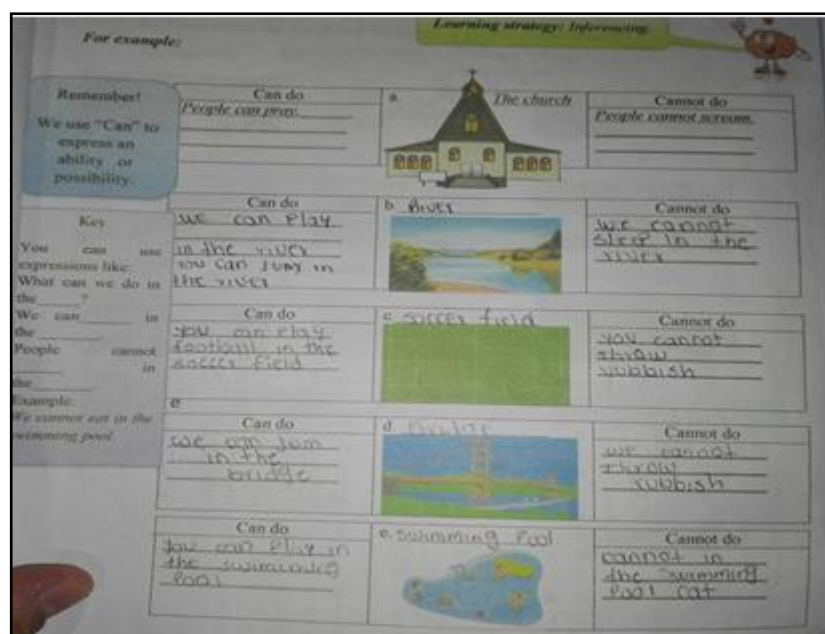
(Field note 5 & Figure 3. students' artifact- workshop 1)



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The previous excerpts from students' artefacts and video transcription show that learners considered some examples as models to start to speak without making mistakes. Thus, they felt comfortable to speak in English. Similarly, students took advantage of the models of the workshops since they built sentences following the grammar structures and the vocabulary provided in the lesson.

In the following video transcription, it is evident how students started to introduce vocabulary and grammar structures in their speaking.



T: We are going to socialize the last point of the lesson number one. Ok, the last point. So, please! Who wants to tell me? What can we do in the river?
 Who wants to participate? Ok, Ironman
 Ironman: We can play in the river.
 T: Ok, you can play in the river. Another question, what can we do in the church? Ok Start fire
 Startfire: people can pray in the church... [sic]
(Video recording transcription & figure 4. students' artifacts - workshop 1)

Those participants present the similar features in their interventions, since they drew on the models presented during the contextualized lessons. So, they took advantage of vocabulary and the grammatical structure offered by their teacher. For this reason, they constructed comprehensible paragraphs as they were learning how to develop their oral communication. Likewise, they followed examples in the text below.

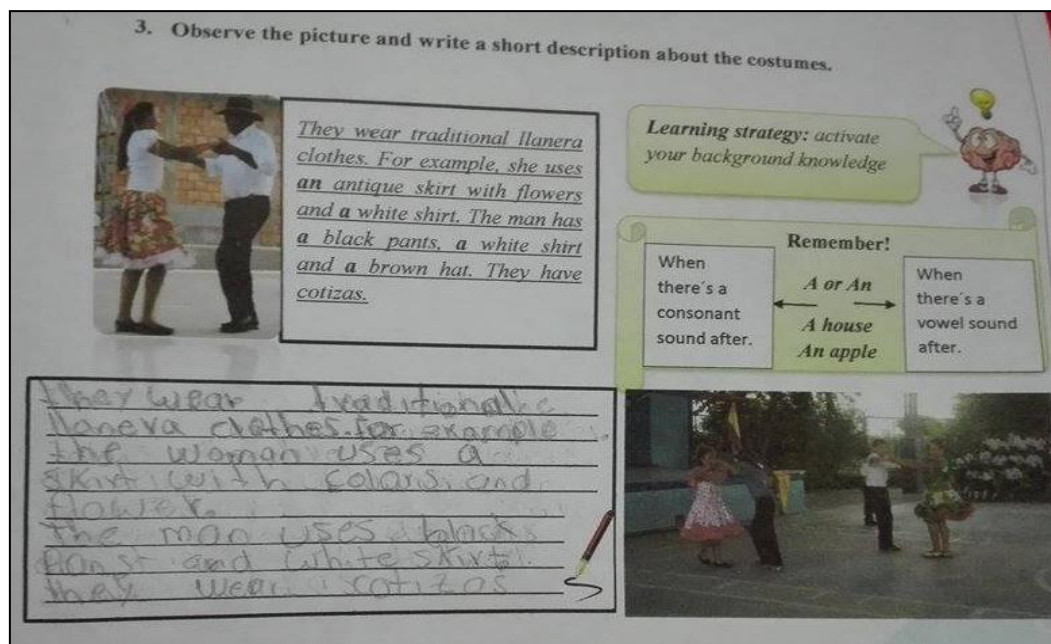


Figure 5. Students' artifact-workshop 2

In this text, it was noticeable that the student followed the example since grammar structures and vocabulary from the model, were included during the description. However, some students changed some words (as Ironman); but they conserved the models. According to Tatum (2005), “students need to hear and see new words repeatedly if they are to remember them and use them” (p. 100). In this sense, is worth to say that using examples, teachers can help students remember the vocabulary in writing and speaking when they start their texts or developing their oral communication. As previously said, repetition and constant exposure to the target language improve language learning, and then it is relevant to explore how the layout of the workshops contributed to generate meaningful and relevant knowledge.

The sequenced activities or lessons enhance the students' learning development. This sub-category is related to how the sequenced activities or lessons helped students to understand the workshop and improve in their oral communication skill. According to Brooks and Stock (1999), “Learning activities should be sequenced so they fit together in a meaningful and memorable way” (p. 68). It means that, through sequenced activities or tasks students increase

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their possibilities to get the expected result. Thus, the following field note describes the students' process to create a short text.

This lesson was centered on writing activities. The pre-writing was a matching activity about the objects that are in the parks and their use. The second activity was drawing a park and named the objects that people can find there. The while-writing activity was completing a short text about Puerto Gaitan's Parks with words that they saw before. The post writing activity was creating a short text where students described the Cimarron Park... [sic]

(Field note 3-workshop 1)

As seen in the sample, lessons were designed with the purpose of guiding students in their process of learning. Their content and their sequence contributed to develop an organized learning process since learners first started to acquire some vocabulary and at the end of the lesson they showed a final product. Indeed, sequencing and guidance were relevant when giving students opportunities to understand vocabulary and content.

Consequently, the next excerpt shows the process that students followed to start to develop their oral communication.

T: lesson number one. Festivals' typical food and people's gastronomy preferences. Who wants to read the first point?

Thor: me

T: ok.

Thor: Underline the words that are related to food and find them in puzzle.

T: Ok, the words that are in the box an example "beef", and you underline and then, find them in the puzzle (teacher explaining the point, showing the example). So, please! Start with the first activity! (Students are working).

T: finish. What are the words that you find? The first one is beef. What is the second?

Raise your hand, please. What is the second?

Ironman: chicken... Who wants to read the second point?

Ironman: me!

T: Ok, read the second point.

Ironman: Read the descriptions of typical food and match them to correct picture.

T: we are going to read... Who wants to read B?

Thor: Me! (He raises his hand).

T: ok, read!

Thor: b) We like grilled beef with potato and yucca.

T: what is?

Sx: Masato

Captain America: Mamona! [sic]

(Video recording transcripts-workshop 2)

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Hence, students identified the vocabulary about staple local food to understand the next text of the second activity that included the vocabulary related to typical food. This is relevant, as comprehension of topics and content requires from a clear understanding of what students are doing and the purpose of it. According to Rivers (1987) “through interaction, students can increase their language store as they listen or read authentic linguistic material” (p. 165). This means that, teachers and students need to work together to promote learning and shape meaning.

Furthermore, the sequenced activities allowed students to understand the topic and acquire more vocabulary that they could relate to the images in the workshop or things that they can see in their community.

In the same way, students affirmed that the sequenced activities promoted the students’ self-confidence as it can be seen in the following figure which shows the results of the students’ self-assessment where they evaluated their process.

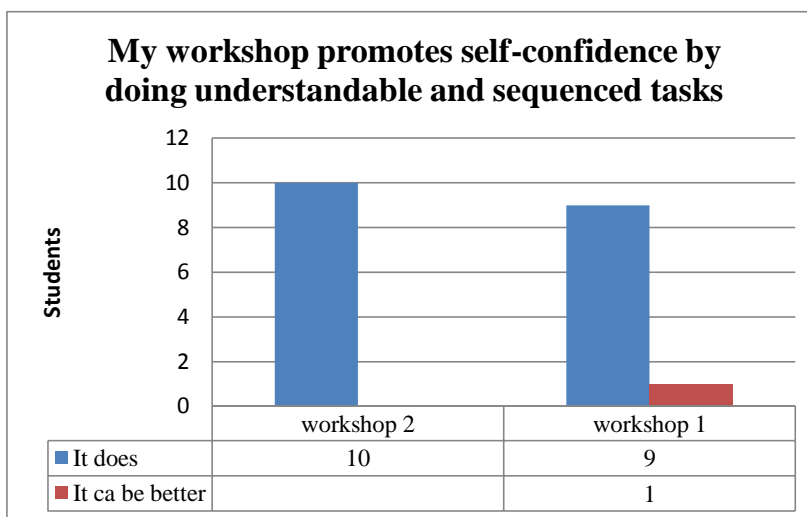


Figure 6. Students’ self-assessment sections (self-confidence and sequenced tasks)

As noticed, students felt comfortable when they developed sequenced activities. In the workshop 1, the 90% of the students expressed that workshop promoted self-confidence when

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they did sequenced activities. In the workshop 2, the 100% of them agreed that sequenced activities helped to have self-confidence in the development of the workshop. In sum, the sequenced activities or lessons enhanced students to foster their learning process because the sequenced activities permit the students to get their learning objectives as Levin (2014) stated “some task flows are composed of sequences of different activities that users need to complete in order to reach the end goal” (p. 54). For that reason, students developed the different sequenced activities to develop their oral communication. In relation to oral communication, I will present the second category with its corresponding sub-categories that encompass the students’ oral communication micro-skills.

Having described and exemplified the first research category and the corresponding subcategories, the next section deals with the second category.

Oral communication as a vehicle to express ideas or feelings. This category explores how oral communication activities were a vehicle that helped students to increase their knowledge about topics related to their culture to develop their cultural awareness. During the workshops, students were not only exposed to a certain amount of vocabulary and grammatical rules but also, they had the chance to put into practice that knowledge when expressing their ideas or feelings. To this respect, Gulikers, Bastiaens and Kirschner (2006) stated that oral communication needs to be planned, strategized, practiced and assessed, preferably in an “authentic” setting. In this sense, and considering the community based-pedagogy approach, students’ oral communication was triggered by common and relevant issues from their community.

Furthermore, there are some micro-skills as body movements, lexical units and communicative functions that were considered towards the process to develop an effective oral communication (Brown, 2001). For this reason, this category is divided in three sub-categories:

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Fostering the communication with body movements, strengthening the communication through the acquisition of vocabulary, and building new ideas or concepts by sharing points of view and feelings

Fostering the communication with body movements. When performing the activities during the contextualized workshops, students' made use of their body as a medium for communicating their feelings or points of view in the English classes.

Mertz (2002) argued:

I have always thought of dance as a language: a language that speaks through the human body. How clearly that language will speak depends upon how clearly the body can articulate, for with clearness of articulation, there comes clearness of communication. (p. 3)

By the same token, Kuhnke (2007) asserted that, "Body movements reveal ...thoughts, moods, and attitudes" (p. 1). Indeed, when people convey messages, facial features and body movements contribute and emphasize the verbal message. Indeed, students resorted to non-verbal language to complement their ideas by making appropriate body movements in an attempt to communicate effectively since some activities ask them to communicative some ideas as it is presented in the next picture.

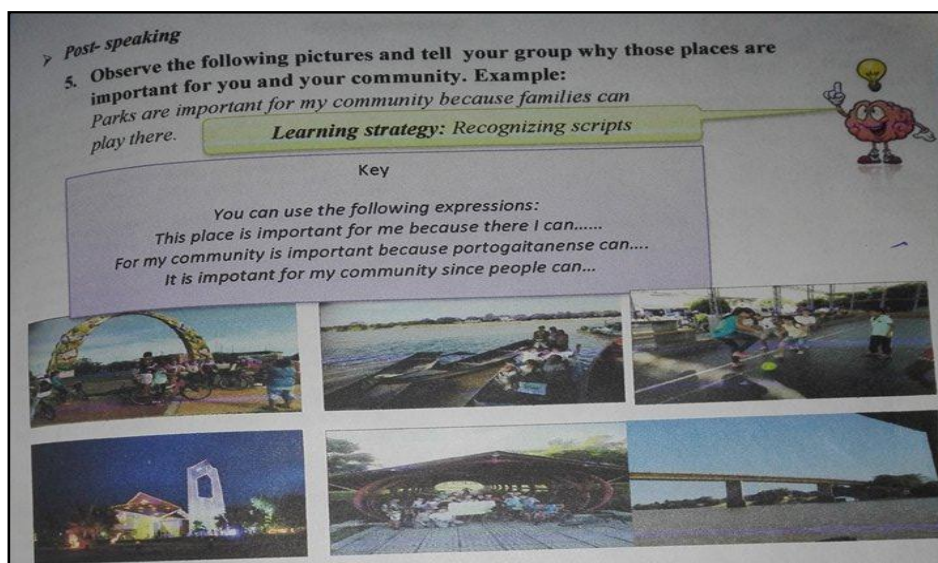


Figure7. Students' artifact-workshop 1

During the implementation of workshops, some learners used their body movements to support communication and they helped classmates to understand their ideas because sometimes students forgot words or grammar. It is evident in the following fragment of one field note.

Students could communicate orally with some mistakes but their ideas were comprehensible. Besides, when they shared their points of view some of them use their hands to try to convey the right messages. For example, some of them moved their hands when forgot a word and their faces expressed their feelings in the class.... [sic]

(Field note 5- workshop 1)

As seen above, a common part of the body that learners used was their hands as they wanted to create a good oral communication with others. Moreover, when students used their hands, they were able to call classmates' attention as movement helps students to be interested in different topics (Legel & Kuczala, 2010). In this regard, students imitated some actions to give understandable ideas about what they were saying to maintain an effective communication.

Now, we are going to continue with a game that is mime. [teacher explains the activity]
[captain America represents the mime]
Ironman: he swims in the river.
[some students forgot the grammar and the remembered the structure and rules]
T: point for the group 1. Another person.
[student Sx passes and do the performance]
Raiven: we observe typical dance in Gaitán.
[ironman does the performance]

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Captain America: he steals money.

Video recording transcription, workshop 2

I consider that it is a good place to visit because ju can tan [imitates the action].

Startfire:ehh I, I consider that it is a good place to visit bekauz you cann enjoy [imitates the action].

Sx: I cul that it is a good (1) place to visit bekauz enhoy fish.

Ironman: I consider that it is a good place to visit because jou can transport. [imitates the action of driving]. "[sic].

(Video recording transcription-workshop 1)

The previous transcription evidences that students were acquiring some vocabulary and grammatical rules. Thus, they used their body to give clear messages since sometimes they did not speak with the appropriate pronunciation of some words or their listeners did not understand their ideas clearly due to differences in language proficiency. Therefore, their body was the instrument that helped them to start developing their oral communication skill because people can communicate thoughts to other people through the movements (German, 2017).

Besides, students corroborated that they used their body as a medium of communication.

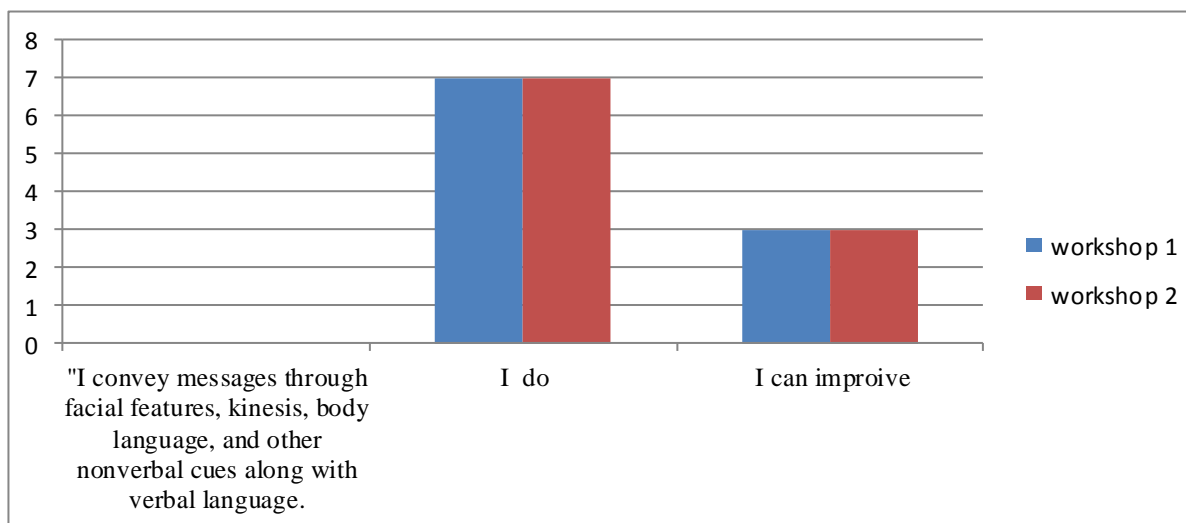


Figure 8. Students' self-assessment sections (body movements)

The previous figure shows that in both workshops, the majority of students used their body to communicate their ideas or feelings since the 70% of them expressed that they conveyed messages using their body and other nonverbal strategies to improve in their interactions.

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According to German (2017), the body movements provide listeners some signals to understand the messages. Therefore, the workshops helped students to foster their oral communication skill using the micro-skill of body movements. However, is necessary to analyze the role of vocabulary in the development of oral communication.

Strengthening the communication through the acquisition of vocabulary. During the contextualized workshops, students were exposed to specific vocabulary related to the topic based on Puerto Gaitan's touristic places and festivals. Moreover, students were encouraged to use that vocabulary as workshops were developed, focusing their attention in the learning of new words. Students became aware that vocabulary is essential for expressing their points of view when using oral communication. Some studies developed by Giambo and McKinney (2004) found students learn vocabulary with phonemic awareness instruction because students were exposed to "some new words; and at early stages of language acquisition, high-quality English interactions may be effective in promoting vocabulary development" (as cited in Graves, August, & Mantilla, 2013, p. 18). In the same line of thought, Krashen and Terrel mentioned that "acquisition depends crucially on the input being comprehensible. And comprehensibility is dependent on the ability to recognize the meaning of key elements in the utterance" (as cited in Coady & Huckin, 2003, p.15).

Accordingly, it is necessary that young students acquire lexical units to start to understand their classmates' interventions and communicate their ideas to others. Due to this, I started providing the words or phrases that they needed to use in their oral communication activities, as shown in the evidences below.

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WORKSHOPS TO FOSTER ORAL COMMUNICATION AND CULTURE

Lesson 1 Grammar and Vocabulary

Festivals' typical food and peoples' gastronomy preferences

1. Underline the words that are related to food and find them in puzzle.

Learning strategy: Relating new language information to previous knowledge.

Beef	Car	Money	Rice	Sugar
Dance	Cornmeal	Salt	Shows	Water
Chicken	Potatoes	Miss	Cheese	Parades
Yucca	Music	River	Drink	Economy

Y N C Z F R O S X F L B A Y P
X A J E I G H P A Q R I J V G
F E E N A O O J L D R I N K
R B X M W T C A R K T V F L C
E N N S A S J E S E E H C N
V I G T M U S I C J I Y H K E
I Z O W A T E R K H E I H C Q
R E M I T M D A T N C A N A U
S I O G C F A L O K T A K A Q
M O F L Z R R M E M D R E V Y
W A D N M I A N I D A M C I B
N P A A N X P J E G N N J N L
E C I R F G B V U R J I C Z A
R Y A C C U Y S O P P S S I T
X E P S N T X C D S J G X S

2. Read the descriptions of typical food and match them to correct picture.

a) My favorite food has rice, chicken, pork, beef, cornmeal, and it is in banana leaves.

b) We like grilled beef with potato and yucca.

c) I prepare this food with rice, cheese and it is wrapped in leaves.

d) I like this drink because it has rice, water and, panela.

Rice envueltos

Hallacas

Mamona

Masato

Figure 9. Students' artifact-workshop 2

In the previous artifacts students were exposed to words related to food to start to acquire that helped them to develop an activity about typical food as it is evident in the workshop. Thus, students could learn lexical units that allowed them to understand the descriptions or text about typical food.

Moreover, students had the opportunity to practice the vocabulary in their oral interventions since they practiced pronunciation as it evident in the next excerpt:

Teacher explained the activity about the recognizing some places in Gaitán and she said the pronunciation to start learning some important words of the workshop since they had some problems in terms of that. Besides, students practice the pronunciation of some phrases that appears in the second activity. Then, teacher asked students about their matching and they could start to say some phrases to communicate their answers. For example: *Students say: refresh, take photographs, cross, fish... [sic]*

(Field note 1-workshop 1)

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Thus, I was conscious of providing students of the necessary input to develop the different activities from the workshops and to understand the classmates' ideas. In fact, students started using that input for expressing their ideas orally and it is noticeable in the fragment below.

Now, who wants to read the questions?

Ironman: me! A-What did you see in the video?

Sx: I saw people famous.

Teacher: [corrects] famous people.

Ironman: I saw many people and singers.

T: what places did you see?

Raiven: what places did you know?

Ironman: me! I saw four places the bridge, the river, the malecon and the beach.

T: how many singers did you see?

Ss: J. balvin, daddy yanki, Rinaldo Armas...

_T: how many?

Ss: seven places.

T::what sports did you watch?

Sx: football

Sx: volleyball... [sic]

Video recording transcription, workshop 1

The previous fragment shows how students used the vocabulary in their interventions. Besides, it was not necessary for them to understand the whole structures of the sentences; instead, they were focused on getting key words from the activities as a means for understanding. Thus, vocabulary was fostered through constant exposure to culture-related activities.

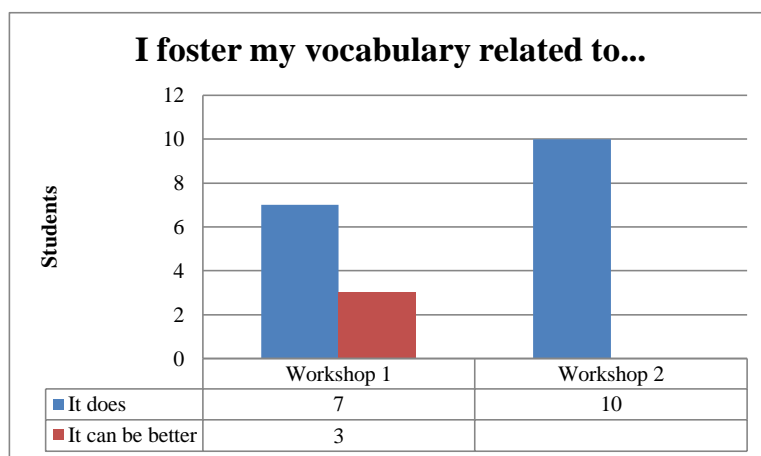


Figure 10. Students' self-assessment sections (lexical)

This figure shows the comparison between both workshops, in the first workshop, as they were starting to learn vocabulary, was more difficult for them to use some words. However, in the second workshop, how students were more familiar with the English language, they were encouraged to use more lexical units and recall previous vocabulary. In Takac's (2009) words learning vocabulary implies the familiarity with the lexical units. It means that when students use new vocabulary, they start to develop their ability to learn new lexical units. Consequently, vocabulary instruction and learning contribute to acquisition allowing students to use English as a way for sharing their ideas or thoughts.

Building new ideas or concepts by sharing points of view and feelings. Hence, the workshops about cultural context allowed students to communicate their ideas or express feelings. As a result, students started to build their own concepts about what oral communication entails and how it is achieved. According to Northcutt and McCoy (2004), when students and teachers create constant communication paths, students create meaningful learning as they share their ideas and build new ones, as evinced in the following samples.

Students could demonstrate through this lesson the advance of their oral communication since they could maintain short conversations with the vocabulary or phrases that had learned in the previous lessons. Furthermore, students conveyed their thoughts and ideas about the importance of tourist places and they used the communication with a purpose that is one micro-skill of the oral communication... [sic]

(Field note 5 –analysis- workshop 1)

As noticed, the participants share their ideas about the importance of touristic places and they also heard their classmates' ideas. In this sense, they could take advantage of the different perspectives that arose from the development of the activities.

In the image below, students built a conceptual map by groups bearing in mind their ideas based on advantages and disadvantages of festivals.

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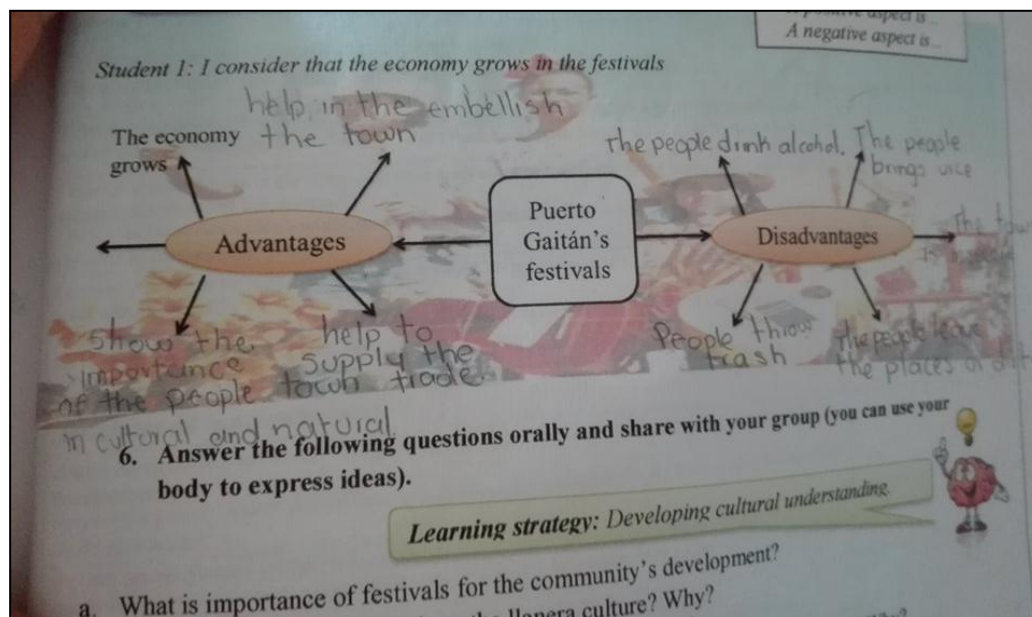


Figure 11. Students' artifact-workshop 2

This image was the result of their interventions and it is evidenced that students gave good ideas to develop that activity and it is corroborated with the next excerpt of the video transcription.

[group 1]

Ironman: we are going to organize the maps advantage and disadvantage of Puerto Gaitan festivals. Ok, Thor.

Thor: I consider an advantage, the people know the culture.

Sx: I consider an advantage, many people.

Superman: I consider an advantage opportunities of job.

Robin: I consider an advantage the cleaning of the town.

Ironman: good, Robin. And disadvantage Ben 10.

Ben 10: I consider a disadvantage the drugs

Ironman: Thor!

Thor: I consider a disadvantage many trashes.

Superman: I consider a disadvantage there are drunk people.

Robin: I consider a disadvantage many thieves.

Ironman: we finish the organized map... [sic]

(Video transcription-workshop 2 and students' artifact)

In this fragment of a video transcription, it was noticeable how students shared their ideas about the advantages and disadvantages of festivals to construct a conceptual map. Thus, students

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were able to give meaning and conceptualize what they perceive from their reality. Likewise, the following picture shows the general idea about the definition of a tourist place.

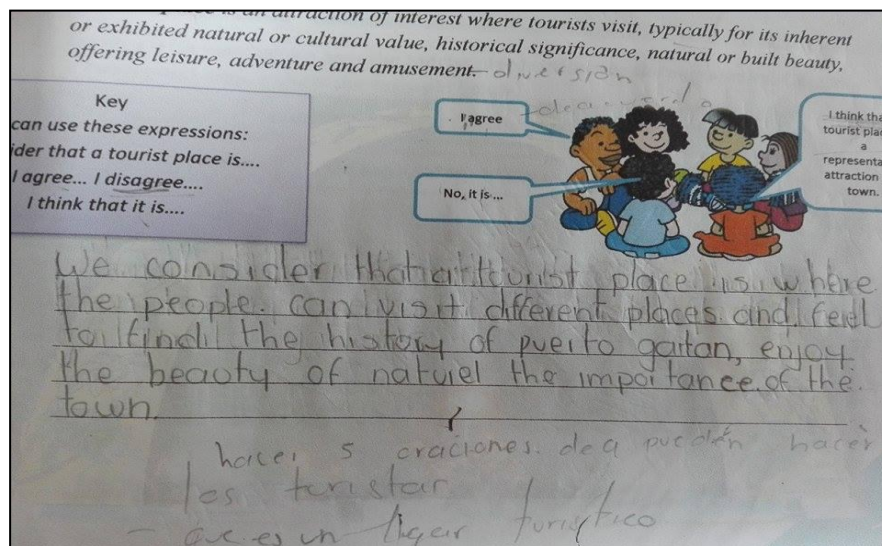


Figure 12. (Student's artifact-workshop 1

The previous artifact shows how students worked together to build one concept taking into account all their classmates' participations. In the same line of thought, students developed their cultural awareness since they worked with cultural topics and the next category refers to this aspect.

Developing students' cultural awareness by means of knowing their own culture.

This category refers to the use of cultural topics in the workshops. Thus, students were exposed to different vocabulary related to their culture because they selected those cultural topics in the needs analysis survey. In Tomlinson and Masuhara's (2004) words, the cultural awareness helps students to be open-minded and tolerant to achieve cultural empathy and sensitivity. In the same line of thought, Tomlinson (2013) affirmed that "awareness may not be wholly determined by cultural factors, but it is culturally conditioned. It includes elements such as forms of address, the expression of politeness, discourse conventions and situational constraints on conversational

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behavior” (p. 449). Thus, when people start to work with their own culture, they identify some characteristics of it and recognize the importance of the culture for one community. Therefore, this category is divided in two subcategories: *culture through cultural knowledge and thinking over the actions to protect the culture*.

Cultural growth through cultural knowledge. Along the workshops, students had the opportunity to start to identify some cultural activities that people develop in the west region of Colombia. According to Hofstede (1994), culture “is the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another” (as cited in Spencer, 2012, p. 2). In this regard, students began to recognize the different activities that people usually do in their community, as depicted in the next samples.

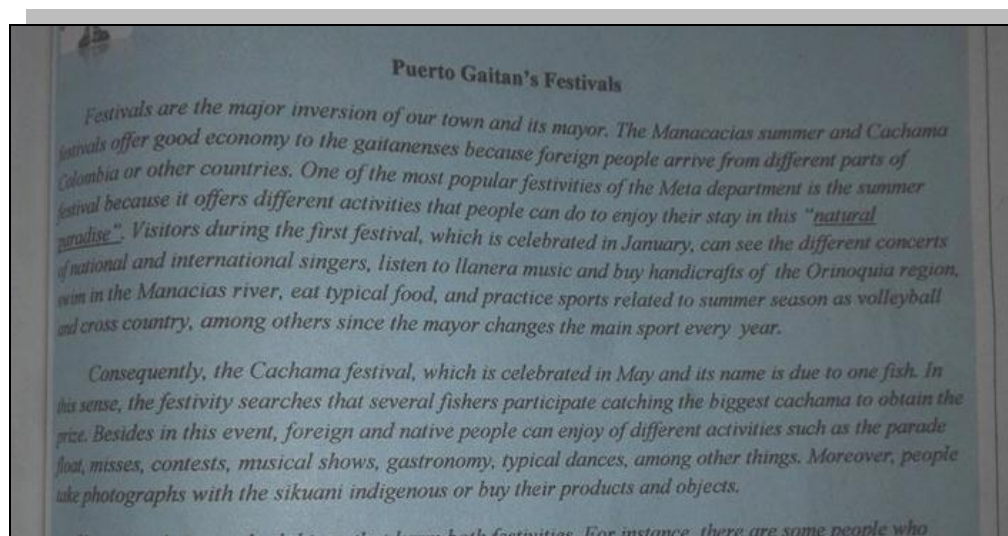


Figure 13. Student's artifact-workshop 2

In the above reading of the workshop 2, students recognized that the river is an important place that allows people to develop some typical activities as fishing. For that reason, one festival has the name of one fish called “cachama”. In this regards, learners started to understand that the river is a representative place of their town and culture. Besides, in a different workshop students expressed the importance of the river as it is evidenced in the excerpt below.

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Students gave their points of view about the importance of the river since they recognized that people can do some activities in this place that are relevant for their community like fish or transport. Moreover, they read about some recommendations to take care of the river and they could begin to think over the environment as essential part for humans. For instance, Ironman said “*I consider that it is a good place to visit because you can transport*” [sic] (**Field note 2-workshop 1**)

Hence, learners identified some activities that people do in their community as fishing or transporting different objects through the river. This is important, since students learned the significant role some places have to develop the relevant economic and cultural activities in their context. Jackson (2011) affirmed, “the awareness helps to recognize the unconscious things we say, feel, and do” (p. 3). In other words, this awareness allowed students to identify the different activities that other people do in their town and that were valuable to the people immersed in their context. Indeed, as students felt part of their context, their oral interactions were nurtured by their own knowledge or experiences according to the cultural topics being worked.

...Thor: 3. Discuss with one classmate about the actions that people usually do in the different festivals.
 [teacher explains the point]
 [one group]
 Ironman: the people refresh in the Manacías river.
 ...Ben 10: the people travel in the river.
 ...Ironman: the visitors buy typical food.
 [he does the imitation]
 ...Starfire: people enjoy the different tourist places.
 Raiven: the people dance llanera music.
 Wonder woman: the people can take photographic in different attractions.
 ...Spiderman : the people fish in the river... [sic]
 (**Video transcription-workshop 2**)

As noticed, learners understood that their community had some typical activities that are specific of their department. Furthermore, students identified the food, the music, the activities of the river, and the different places that had an historical meaning for their town and culture. In this sense, students started to develop their superficial culture since they recognized some visual typical aspects of their community (Hidalgo, 1993).

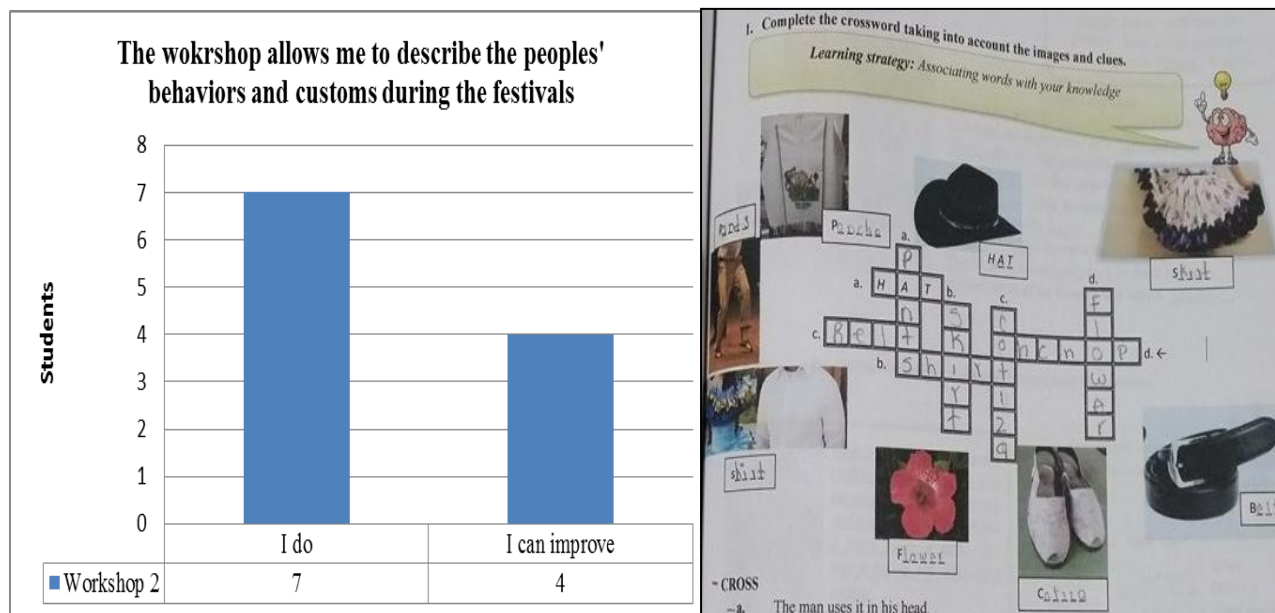


Figure 14. Students' self-assessment sections (culture) and figure 15. students' artifact-workshop 2

As seen in the previous samples, students were exposed to several activities that helped them to identify some important aspects of their culture. In the graph, the 90% of the students described the customs used in festivals, enhancing their cultural awareness as their understanding of their own culture increased (Tomlinson, 2001). In sum, students comprehended that there are some activities that are typical of their community and they were part of it. As a result, students were able to reflect about some actions to take care of their culture and environment.

Thinking over the actions to protect culture. Implementing the workshops that I developed, had a direct impact towards the way students reflect on their culture. Thus, I took into consideration the students' interventions and interactions as a way to explore how this cultural awareness was emerging from students' views. Moreover, students did activities that allowed them to develop their reflective learning to think over some actions to take in relation to their environment and their culture. Boyd and Fales (1983) affirmed that "reflective learning is the process of internally examining and exploring and issue of concern, triggered by an experience,

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which creates and clarifies meanings in term of self and which results in a changed conceptual perspective” (as cited in Jasper, 2006 p.42). Therefore, most students comprehended that they had to change some actions to protect their environment that is part of their culture.

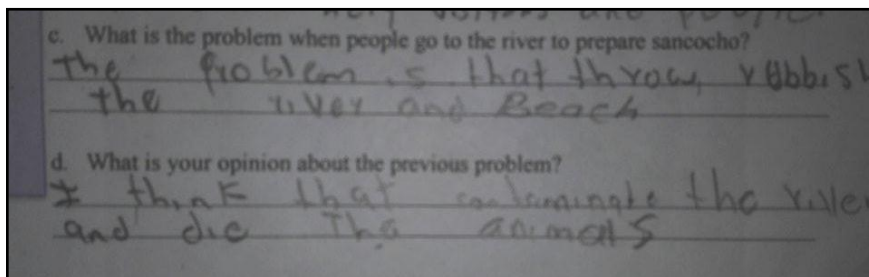


Figure 16. Students' artifact-workshop 1

The above artifact shows how students thought about the problem of contamination in their town and how it affects the animals. According to Moran (2001) “to practice the culture, we also need language. We need to be able to express ourselves and to communicate with members of the culture” (p. 35). Therefore, workshops allowed students to express their ideas and points of view as a way to protect their environment that is part of their culture. Besides, in the next fragment of a field note is evident that students start to develop their cultural awareness.

Students could improve in their cultural awareness since them. By means of the reading, reflect on the importance of the rivers for the humans and understood the actions that they can do to take care of water. Besides, students comprehend the role that plays the rivers for the community and different people... [sic]

(Field note 2)

Accordingly, students started to think about the importance of the river to the community since it offers different activities to do in family that include fishing or eating. Moreover, learners think over about the importance of the festivals that belong to their context. The following excerpt shows the students' ideas about the festivals that are representative events of their culture.

Answer the following questions orally and share with your group (you can use your body to express ideas).

[teacher explains the activity]

Robin: a) What is importance of festivals for the community's development?

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Ironman: is important for my community because more money in the town, Puerto Gaitan and opportunities of jobs for people.

Starfire: the economy grows.

Spiderman: the festivals increase the hotel and the cultural development.

Raiven: b) Do you think that festivals show the llanera culture? Why?

Ss: yes!

Robin: because there singers of llanera music and the people eat typical food.

Ironman: yes, because they observe typical food and dances.

Superman: yes, because they know the cultural llanera throw llanera music.

...Sx: yes, because it has many traditional events.

Raiven: e) Do you consider that your culture is important? Why?

Ss: yes

Ironman: yes because it represents the llano culture and historical culture intruments.

Ben 10: f) Do you take care of your town in festivals? How?

Captain America: yes, because I don't throw trash.

Robin: g) How do you develop a festival that has more positive aspects than negative ones?

Ben 10: stop the drinking in the festivals [sic]

(Video transcription, workshop 2)

As can be seen, students were reflecting about the importance of festivals to their community since they expressed that festivals are the way to show their culture. Based on this, the contextualized workshops students developed, helped them to realize the importance of having a clear perspective of what having a cultural representation demands from people in general and its implications towards the development of culture and festivities. The previous ideas are corroborated in the figure 17 below.



Figure 17. Students' self-assessment section (awareness)

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Clearly, figure 17 reveals that students reflected upon the advantages and disadvantages of festivals since the 100% of them expressed that the workshop allowed them to do so. In this manner, when students reflected on their community's actions, possibilities for a change in terms of behavior and cultural awareness increase as aspects such as values, religion, and typical customs are considered. In few words, they recognized that the culture identifies one community (Gomez, 2005). In sum, the students understood by means of reflection that they had to protect their culture by taking care of their environment as nature, monuments, places, and festivities that are part of their identity.

Chapter V

Conclusions and Pedagogical Implications

This chapter shows the conclusions of this research study bearing in mind the findings of the data analysis interpreted in the previous section with the purpose of answering my research question: What do the development and implementation of contextualized workshops reveal about sixth graders' oral communication and their cultural awareness in a public school? Besides, it presents the pedagogical implications, the limitations, and the further research questions of this study.

Conclusions

The development and implementation of contextualized workshops revealed that students enhanced their learning process using appealing material. According to Núñez and Téllez (2009), “MD entails a rational process and artistic inspiration that together perform a central role in attaining appealing teaching-learning resources” (p. 175). In this sense, students were interested in the workshops because those materials contained colorful pictures to motivate them to learn in a meaningful way. Tomlinson (1998) mentioned that “materials achieve impact when they have a noticeable effect on learners, especially when the learner's curiosity, interest and attention are attracted...through...appealing content” (p. 8). Thus, the different images and some pictures of the both workshops played an important role in the students' advance towards the development of their oral communication and cultural awareness.

Besides, the contextualized workshops helped students to improve their learning since they used examples as bases to understand the activities and learn to construct a successful oral communication. As Erneling (1993) stated, “The teacher does not convey knowledge but giving the pupil an explicit rule, definition or explanation but more indirectly shows the pupil by presenting relevant examples or paradigm cases” (p. 125). It means that examples are intended to

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show students the parameters for starting their compositions or interventions. Moreover, the sequenced activities or lessons contribute to promote students' learning and oral communication. According to Brooks and Stock (1999), "Learning activities should be sequenced so they fit together in a meaningful and memorable way" (p. 68). This means that, language learning is improved by means of guidance and sequencing.

What is more, the contextualized workshops revealed that students used the oral communication as vehicle to express their ideas or feelings. Gulikers, Bastiaens, and Kirschner (2006) stated that oral communication needs to be planned, strategized, practiced and assessed, preferably in an "authentic" setting. In this sense, students were exposed to activities linked to their community where they used their oral communication micro skills (body language, lexical units, and communicative functions). In this regard, students foster the communication with body movements. Mertz (2002) argued "speak depends upon how clearly the body can articulate, for with clearness of articulation, there comes clearness of communication" (p. 3). So that, body language became a resource for students to make their message understood to others.

Moreover, students nurtured and reinforced their communication by the acquisition of vocabulary during the implementation of the workshops. Thus, students became aware that the vocabulary they were practicing was essential for expressing their points of view orally as Krashen and Terrel (as cited in Coady & Huckin, 2003) mentioned that the acquisition occurs when learners are exposed to comprehensible vocabulary. Indeed, when students knew the key words of a text they could understand the meaning of the message. Besides, when students interacted with others and share their points of view and feelings, they started to develop a sense of confidence needed for the learning of a foreign language. According to Northcutt and McCoy (2004), when students and teachers communicate at ease, students are able to see their learning not only as meaningful but as a resource for conceptualization.

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Finally, the contextualized workshops revealed that students develop their cultural awareness by means of knowing their own. In Tomlinson and Masuhara's (2004) words, the cultural awareness helps students to be open-minded and tolerant to achieve cultural empathy and sensitivity. At the same time, students were able to grow in relation to their perception of culture because they had the opportunity to start to identify some cultural aspects that people develop in the west region of Colombia. Likewise, Tomlinson (2013) affirmed that awareness is conditioned by cultural factors. In this regards, students started to work with their own culture, they identify some characteristics of it and recognize the importance of the culture for their community. Also, learners began to think over their actions to protect the culture. According to Boyd and Fales (1983), "reflective learning is the process of internally examining and exploring an issue of concern, triggered by an experience, which creates and clarifies meanings in term of self and which results in a changed conceptual perspective" (as cited in Jasper, 2006 p. 42). Thus, experience and learning interacted together as a way to open student's perceptions about what their own culture is and how it can be preserved and protected.

Pedagogical implications

The development of this research study constitutes an important element inside the educational environment, since it might help to improve the teachers' performance in the classrooms by considering student's interests and needs to create contextualized materials for language learning and cultural awareness. In relation to the school, it was an innovative way to teach and learn English taking into account the curriculum to promote a meaningful learning. Finally, this research study may be a useful resource to the ELT community to develop oral communication micro-skills. Moreover, teachers should contribute to educate integral human beings. Thus, through contextualized workshops students are able to reflect upon their reality and the role they have inside their communities.

Limitations

This research study presents some limitations in terms of the students' English level and their academics duties. Some students did not advance at the same pace others did and because of that, some students did not understand their classmates. Furthermore, there were some students that belonged to other institutional projects and sometimes other teachers required their participation. Another limitation was the teachers' strikes that affected the academic normality in the public institutions during approximately two months.

Further research

Based on my research study and the implications it had in my community, I consider important to broaden the scope of possibilities that research in culture and curriculum integration can have in the learning of a foreign language. Thus, I emphasized on two research concerns: the first one, how to develop cultural identity in the students and the second one, how to integrate the institutional projects in the English classes in meaningful way bearing in mind the constructs of this research study. So that, the following questions can be taken as starting points for further research:

How does materials development contribute to explore students' cultural identity in their speaking performances?

What is the impact of cultural materials integrated to institutional projects in developing students' meaningful learning?

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Appendices**Appendix A: Consent Form**

Puerto Gaitán (Meta), 17 de Noviembre de 2016

Señor Rector:

Fernando Nieto Duarte

I.E. Luis Carlos Galán Sarmiento

Ciudad.

Respetado Rector:

Me dirijo a usted para solicitarle muy amablemente su aprobación para desarrollar mi trabajo de investigación titulado “Contextualized workshops as a strategy to foster the oral communication and cultural awareness” (Los talleres contextualizados como una estrategia para fortalecer la comunicación oral y la conciencia cultural); puesto que como es de su conocimiento me encuentro realizando mi Maestría en Educación con énfasis en Didáctica del Inglés y este proyecto es indispensable para culminar esta etapa en mi crecimiento profesional.

El objetivo del proyecto es explorar la comunicación oral y la conciencia cultural de los estudiantes del grado sexto a través del desarrollo e implementación de talleres contextualizados. Dichos talleres estarán relacionados con el plan de estudios y las temáticas serán escogidas previamente por los estudiantes teniendo en cuenta su contexto cultural.

Asimismo, los estudiantes que participarán del proyecto contarán con una autorización firmada por los padres, o acudientes, quienes serán previamente informados sobre el trabajo a realizar con los estudiantes.

Agradezco de antemano el apoyo y confianza depositados en mí para llevar a cabo con éxito esta investigación y de esta manera, contribuir al crecimiento y reconocimiento de la institución.

Cordialmente,

Caterine Ciprian
Docente de inglés

Vº.Bº. Fernando Nieto
Rector

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Appendix B: Field Notes Form

Field Note 1	
School:	
Date:	Grade:
Workshop 1: _____	
Lesson 1:	
Objective:	
Description	Analysis
<u>Contextualized workshops:</u>	
<u>Oral communication:</u>	
<u>Cultural awareness:</u>	

Appendix C : Survey**Needs Analysis Survey**

Dear student:

The objective of this survey is to gather information about your perceptions in terms of oral communication, cultural awareness, and materials. Also, for this research is very important to know your needs and interests in English language. For this reason, you should answer the questions sincerely since those are going to use for pedagogical purposes and this instrument is confidential. (Put an X if it is necessary)

1. You consider that speaking in English is...
 - a. very easy ____
 - b. easy____
 - c. difficult____
 - d. very difficult____

2. How often do you speak in English?

a. Once per day____	b. Twice per week____
b. Once in a month____	c. Never____

3. What are the difficulties that you present in your oral communication? (You can select several options)
 - a. Vocabulary ____
 - b. Pronunciation____
 - c. Grammar rules____
 - d. Fluency____
 - e. Fear____
 - f. Do not use your body language to express your ideas ____
 - g. Cannot express one's thoughts or feelings____
 - h. Other ____

4. What is culture for you?

5. You prefer the material with ...
 - a. aspects of Colombian context ____
 - b. aspects of your community____
 - c. aspects of your department____
 - d. aspects from countries where people speak English____

6. What kind of topics do you like to develop oral communication micro skills?
 - a. Sports doping____

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- b. School community__
 - c. Puerto Gaitan's tourism__
 - d. Popular festivals__
 - e. Typical food__
 - f. Typical customs__
 - g. Popular dance__
 - h. Traditional music__
 - i. Stories of your community (myths and legends)
 - j. Jobs of the llano__
 - k. Street art__
 - l. The environment of your town__
 - Other:_____
-
7. What kind of activities do you like? (you can select several options)
- a. Matchings exercises__
 - b. Puzzles solving__
 - c. Crosswords solving__
 - d. Reading comprehension__
 - e. Listening comprehension__
 - f. Writing exercises__
 - g. Speaking exercises__
 - h. Others: _____
-
8. When you need to communicate your ideas or feelings, you ...
- a. translate__
 - b. use pauses__
 - c. use your body language__
 - d. say some words in English__
 - e. use some English expressions__
 - f. cannot talk__
9. What oral activities do you prefer?
- a. Oral presentations__
 - b. Retail activities__
 - c. Small group conversations__
10. The material to foster oral communication must include ... (you can select several options)
- a. clear instructions. __
 - b. images and pictures. __
 - c. attractive designs. __
 - d. interesting and contextualized topics. __
 - e. activities that foster my oral communication. __
 - f. grammar boxes. __

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- g. activities that motivates me to learn about the English language. ____
11. for you, cultural awareness is... (you can select several options)
- a. the foundation of communication and it involves the ability of standing back from ourselves and becoming aware of our cultural values, beliefs and perceptions. ____
 - b. to learn about different cultures around the world. ____
 - c. to be aware about my actions in the school. ____
 - d. the understanding of the differences between people who do not belong to the same countries or backgrounds, especially differences in attitudes and values. ____
12. when people are aware culturally, they... (you can select several options)
- a. respect only native people. ____
 - b. respect different beliefs, values and customs that someone has based on that person's origins. ____
 - c. recognize the diversity. ____
 - d. recognize their culture as the only one and do not accept other one ____

Thank you!